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*General Editor*—SIR HENRY NEWBOL

# THE TOWN IN LITERATURE

No. 49



RICHARD WHITTINGTON

*From a pen-drawing by E. Heber Thompson, after an old engraving in the possession of the Rev. W. B. ATHERTON,  
COBERLEY RECTORY, near CHELTENHAM*

# THE TOWN IN LITERATURE

Compiled and Edited  
by

L. S. WOOD  
and

H. L. BURROWS



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## INTRODUCTION

FROM the beginning of civilization men have gathered in towns, and the names of these early units of society have not lost their power to call up visions—Babylon, Troy, Jerusalem, Athens, Alexandria, Baghdad, Rome itself, the magic of whose name spelt romance to St. Paul (for the essence of romance is the Quest), and spells romance to most of us to this day. A glamour hardly less dazzling hangs over the Italian city-states—Venice, Genoa, Florence—and over other towns of the Middle Ages. In England London, York, Gloucester, Bristol, Canterbury, Durham, Winchester, Norwich, Exeter, Carlisle have lent their romance to the very roads and railways that lead to them—the London Road, the Bristol Road, the Great North Road, the Dover Road, and the magic words, “London only,” “London next stop”! No conception of town life comparable with that of the Greeks, or of the Italians of the Middle Ages, ever prevailed in this country, which realized its nationhood, its entity as a country, early. But from the first towns were looked up to as centres. Each had its rural district, undefined but unquestioned; sometimes the charters of the Gilds recognized such districts, as at Lincoln and York. But whether recognized or not, the fact was there, and to-day there is not a square mile of the countryside that does not look to some town as its Mecca. The greater towns were capitals indeed, as Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Bristol are to-day. The Bishop of

Durham was a potentate keeping almost royal state. Macaulay describes Norwich in 1685 as more like the capital of a province than a country town. Defoe, visiting Bristol in 1725, was amazed at its independence, and recounted how it needed not to send its imports to London, for the whole of the West depended upon it, and provided an ample and ever-ready market. There have, of course, been changes. A few seaports have grown: many have decayed with the increasing size of ships and the shifting of manufactures. Turning-points in our national history have left their traces in our towns. The Dissolution of the Monasteries gave a hard blow to some: Coventry and Beverley especially suffered; the decay of the Gilds was a bitter blow to others, notably to York. All through the Middle Ages the ambition of the town had been to obtain its charter, the legal indication of its privileges, to become corporate. (Stratford-on-Avon achieved this dignity in 1553, just before John Shakespeare, father of William, arrived there from Snitterfield to set up in general trade.) But time brought its revenges. The Five Mile Act of 1665, forbidding Nonconformist ministers to dwell within five miles of a corporate town, materially helped the growth of such non-corporate villages as Birmingham, and to a less extent Manchester, which in 1725 Defoe described as "the greatest mere village in England." The expansion of trade in the eighteenth century, with the new processes in manufacture, drove population northwards to the water-power and coal of the northern part of the island, and thus the balance of our town life was changed, but not so radically as first appeared. Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham are not less important to the life of the nation to-day than they were in the days of the Free Trade agitation. But their supremacy does not exist now as it did then.

Notwithstanding changes, one thing is permanent

—the influence of each town over its own province, its own portion of the countryside. This influence, far from diminishing, is increasing: as a magnet, drawing the countryside to itself, the town is proving more and more attractive. In 1688 it was estimated that, out of a population of five and a half millions, only one and a quarter millions dwelt in towns. In 1770 Arthur Young concluded that the numbers of town and country dwellers were equal. By 1821 the ratio was two town-dwellers to one country-dweller. To-day the proportion is overwhelming.

In literature as in fact, London through the centuries has tended to dwarf other English towns. Fourteenth century London gives the setting to Chaucer's Prologue, in reading which we

Forget six counties overhung with smoke,  
Forget the snorting steam and piston stroke,  
Forget the spreading of the hideous town ,  
Think rather of the pack-horse on the down,  
And dream of London small and white and clean,  
The clear Thames bordered by its gardens green ;  
Think that below the bridge keen-lapping waves  
Smite some few keels that bear Levantine staves,  
Cut from the yew-wood on the burnt-up hill,  
And pointed jars that Greek hands toiled to fill,  
And treasured, scanty spice from some far sea,  
Florence gold-cloth and Ypres napery,  
And cloth of Bruges and hogsheads of Guenne ;  
While nigh the thronged wharf Geoffrey Chaucer's pen  
Moves over bills of lading.

Before the close of the fifteenth century Dunbar was celebrating London as " of townes *A per se*," and in the sixteenth century London was crowned by Shakespeare. It forms the centre of all the literature of our " Augustan Age," the age of Addison and Pope and Bolingbroke, of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, when the cult of " urbanity " was at its height. In commerce as well as in culture the London of the eight-

eenth century loomed supreme. Defoe in his *Tour* observes over and over again how the whole country only seemed to exist to feed the great metropolis of London. And London is the birthplace of English poets. With the exception of Stratford-on-Avon, Mr. Birrell (a Cambridge man) once playfully observed, one need, to honour our poets, visit but two places—London, their birthplace, and Cambridge, their university. In this collection it would have been easy to represent London more fully, for the bulk of our town literature centres in London. And it has been difficult to represent some large modern cities at all : they are too new to figure much in literature, and questions of copyright have sometimes prevented the inclusion of such literature as there is. Birkenhead, for example, the meat market of the Empire, famed for its flour mills, its oil reservoirs, its vast docks, and its teeming population, had in 1830 only a few hundred inhabitants. Bradford, though it has a long history as a woollen town and played its part in the Civil War, was small enough in 1800 to have but one church—its present Cathedral.

The aim of this book is to present the town, through the authors and centuries represented, as the home of men and women. Literature cannot be separated from history, but the aim here is literary and not historical. Such historical passages as there are, are historical in the sense in which Thackeray appreciated history—that is, on its purely human side : “ I like to people the old world with its everyday figures and inhabitants—not so much with heroes fighting immense battles and inspiring repulsed battalions to engage ; or statesmen locked up in darkling cabinets and meditating ponderous laws or dire conspiracies—as with people occupied with their everyday work or pleasure, . . . the citizens’ wives and their daughters looking out from the balconies ; and the burghers over their beer and mumm, rising up, cap in hand,” and so

on. Thackeray liked to see the maypole rising in the Strand, the ladies frequenting the toyshops, the chairmen jostling in the streets, the link-boys running before the chariots, and the footmen fighting around the theatre doors. That is the side of town life which it is the aim of this book to present—"the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street, the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print-shops, the old bookstalls, coffee-houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes—London itself a pantomime and a masquerade." These were the things that moved Lamb to decline Wordsworth's invitation to visit him in Cumberland in 1801, and they are the things that move all true lovers of town life to-day.

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L. S. W.  
H. L. B.

9th November 1924.

# THE TOWN IN LITERATURE

## London

(WILLIAM DUNBAR)

[William Dunbar, the most noteworthy of the older Scottish poets, was born about 1460. He became a Franciscan friar, but later was allowed to withdraw from the Order, and served James IV for a time, assisting in the negotiations which led to the marriage of James and the daughter of Henry VII. On the occasion of this marriage he wrote his greatest poem, *The Thrissil and the Rois*. In 1504 he became a priest. As nothing is known of his history after Flodden, it has been surmised that he perished in that battle.]

LONDON, thou art of townes *A per se*,  
Soveraign of Cities, semeliest in sight,  
Of high renoun, riches and royaltie ;  
Of lordes, barons, and many a goodly Knyght ;  
Of most delectable lusty ladies bright ;  
Of famous prelates, in habits clericall ;  
Of merchauntes full of substaunce and of myght :  
London, thou art the flower of cities all.

Gladdeth anon, thou lusty Troynovaunt,  
Citie that some tyme cleped was New Troy  
In all the erth, imperiall as thou stant,  
Pryncesse of townes, of pleasure and of joy,

A richer restith under no Christen ray ;  
 For manly power, with craftes naturall,  
 Formeth none Fairer, sith the flode of Troy :  
 London, thou art the flower of cities all.

Gemme of all joy, jasper of jocunditie,  
 Most myghty carbuncle of vertue and valour ;  
 Strong Troy in vigour and in strenuytie ;  
 Of royall cities rose and geraflour ;  
 Empresse of townes, exalt in honour ;  
 In beawtie beryng the crone imperiall ;  
 Swete paradise precellyng in pleasure :  
 London, thou art the flower of cities all.

Above all ryvers thy ryver hath renowne,  
 Whose beryall stremys, pleasaunt and preclare,  
 Under thy lusty wallys renneth down,  
 Where many a swanne doth swymme with wynges fair  
 Where many a barge doth saile, and row with are,  
 Where many a ship doth rest with top-royall,  
 O towne of townes, patron and not compare,  
 London, thou art the flower of cities all.

Upon thy lusty brigge of pylers white  
 Been merchauntes full royall to behold ;  
 Upon thy stretes goeth many a semely knyght  
 In velvet gownes and in cheynes of gold.  
 By Julyus Cesar thy Tower founded of old  
 May be the hous of Mars victoryall,  
 Whos artillery with tonge may not be told :  
 London, thou art the flower of cities all.

Strong be thy walles that aboute thee standes ;  
 Wise be the people that within thee dwelles ;  
 Fressh is thy ryver with his lusty strandes ;  
 Blith be thy Chirches, wele sownyng be thy belles ;

*Formeth, Appeareth.*  
 (2, 608)

*Geraflour, Gillyflower.*

*Are, Oar.*



Rich be thy merchauntes in substaunce that excelles ;  
 Fair be their wives, right louesom, white and small ;  
 Clere be thy virgyns, lusty under kelles :  
 London, thou art the flower of cities all.

Thy famous maire, by pryncely governaunce,  
 With sword of justice, thee ruleth prudently.  
 No lord of Paris, Venyce, or Floraunce  
 In dignytie or honour goeth to hym nye.  
 He is exemplar, loodester, and guye ;  
 Pryncipall patron and rose orygynall,  
 Above all maires as maister most worthy :  
 London, thou art the flower of cities all.

## The Entry of Edward V. into London

(SIR THOMAS MORE)

[Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), the celebrated scholar, statesman, and early friend of Henry VIII, was the author of *Utopia*, and also a *History of King Richard III*, from which this extract is taken. More, unable to bend his convictions to the king's will, suffered death on a charge of treason]

WHEN the kynge approched nere to the citie, Edmonde Sha goldesmithe then mayre, with Willyam White and John Mathewe sheriffis, and all the other aldermenne in scarlette, with five hundred horse of the citezens in violette, received hym reverentlye at Harnesey (Hornsey), and rydyng from thence, accompanied him into the citye, whiche hee entered the fowrth daye of Maye, the firste and laste yeare of hys raygne. But the Duke of Gloucester bare him in open sighte so reverentlye to the Prince, with all semblaunce of lowlinesse, that from the great obloquy in which hee was soo late before, hee was sodainlye fallen

*Kelles*, Head-dresses.

(2,608)

*Guye*, Guide.

in soo greate truste, that at the counsaile next assembled, hee was made the onely manne chose and thoughte moste mete, to bee protectoure of the king and hys realme, so that (were it destenye or were it foly) the lamb was betaken to the wolfe to kepe.

## Dick Whittington

(HOLINSHED'S " CHRONICLE ")

[The *Chronicles* of Raphael Holinshed, published first in 1577, and in an augmented form in 1587, contains not only a chronicle or history of England, of Ireland, and of Scotland by Holinshed and others, but a survey of England by William Harrison. This survey, which is of extreme interest, is published in a convenient form in the Canterbury Series. Holinshed himself was a man of wide reading, and was free from gross partiality. Little is known of his life, it is said that he was educated at one of the universities, became a clergyman, and died about the year 1580.]

IN this king's time [Henry IV's], and in the eighth yeare of his reigne (as Richard Grafton hath recorded) a worthe citizen of London named Richard Whittington, mercer and alderman, was elected maior of the said citie, and bare that office three times. This man so bestowed his goods and substance, that he hath well deserved to be registered in chronicles. First he erected one house or church in London to be a house of praier, and named the same after his own name, Whittington college, remaining at this daie. In the said church, besides certeine preests and clearks, he placed a number of poore aged men and women, builded for them houses and lodgings, and allowed them wood, coles, cloth, and weekelie monie to their great releefe and comfort. This man also at his owne cost builded the gate of London called Newgate in the

yeere of our Lord 1422, which before was a most ouglie and lothsome prison. He also builded more than the halfe of S. Bartholomews hospitall in west Smithfield. He builded likewise the beautifull librarie in the graie friers in London now called Christs hospitall, standing in the north part of the cloister thereof, where in the wall his arms be graven in stone. He also builded for the ease of the maior of London, his brethren, and the worshipfull citizens, on the solemne daies of their assemblie, a chapell adjoining to the Guildhall; to the intent that before they entered into anie of their worldlie affaires, they should begin with praier and invocation to God for his assistance: at the end joining to the south part of the said chapell, he builded for the citie a library of stone, for the custodie of their records and other bookes. He also builded a great part of the east end of Guildhall; and did manie other good deedes worthie of imitation. By a writing of this mans owne hand, which he willed to be fixed as a schedule to his last will and testament, it appeared what a pitifull and relenting heart he had at other mens miseries, and did not onelie wish but also did what he could procure for their releefe. In so much that he charged and commanded his executors, as they would answer before God at the daie of the resurrection of all flesh, that if they found anie debtor of his, whome if in conscience they thought not to be well worth three times as much as they owght him, and also out of other mens debt, and well able to paie, that then they should never demand it; for he clearlie forgave it: and that they should put no man in sute for anie debt due to him. A worthie memoriall of a notable minded gentleman.

## Oxford and Cambridge

(WILLIAM HARRISON)

[William Harrison, Rector of Radwinter, in Essex, wrote a *Description of Britaine and England* for Holinshed's *Chronicle*. He was born in London, but the date of his birth is unknown. He was at Cambridge in 1551, and afterwards studied at Oxford, where he took his M A in 1562, becoming a Bachelor of Divinity at Cambridge seven years later. He died at Windsor, of which he was Canon, in 1593.]

THE colleges of Oxford, for curious workmanship and private commodities, are much more stately, magnificent, and commodious than those of Cambridge: and thereunto the streets of the town for the most part are more large and comely. But for uniformity of building, orderly compaction, and politic regiment, the town of Cambridge, as the newer workmanship, exceeds that of Oxford (which otherwise is, and hath been, the greater of the two) by many a fold (as I guess), although I know divers that are of the contrary opinion. This also is certain, that whatsoever the difference be in building of the town streets, the townsmen of both are glad when they may match and annoy the students, by encroaching upon their liberties, and keep them bare by extreme sale of their wares, whereby many of them become rich for a time, but afterward fall again into poverty, because that goods evil gotten do seldom long endure. . . .

The common schools of Cambridge also are far more beautiful than those of Oxford, only the Divinity School at Oxford excepted, which for fine and excellent workmanship cometh next the mould of the King's Chapel in Cambridge, than the which two, with the Chapel that King Henry the Seventh did build at Westminster, there are not (in my opinion) made of

lime and stone three more notable piles within the compass of Europe.

In all other things there is so great equality between these two universities as no man can imagine how to set down any greater, so that they seem to be the body of one well-ordered commonwealth, only divided by distance of place and not in friendly consent and orders. In speaking therefore of the one I cannot but describe the other; and in commendation of the first I cannot but extol the latter; and, so much the rather, for that they are both so dear unto me as that I cannot readily tell unto whether of them I owe the most goodwill. Would to God my knowledge were such as that neither of them might have cause to be ashamed of their pupil, or my power so great that I might worthily requite them both for those manifold kindnesses that I have received of them!

## Town and Gown

(WILLIAM HARRISON)

To these two [universities] also we may in like sort add the third, which is at London (serving only for such as study the laws of the realm) where there are sundry famous houses, of which three are called by the name of the Inns of the Court, the rest of the Chancery, and all built before time for the furtherance and commodity of such as apply their minds to our common laws. Out of these also come many scholars of great fame, whereof the most part have heretofore been brought up in one of the aforesaid universities, and prove such commonly as in process of time rise up (only through their profound skill) to great honour in the commonwealth of England. They have also degrees of learning among themselves, and rules of discipline, under which they live most civilly in their

houses, albeit that the younger of them abroad in the streets are scarcely able to be bridled by any good order at all. Certainly this error was wont also greatly to reign in Cambridge and Oxford, between the students and the burgesses ; but, as it is well left in these two places, so in foreign countries it cannot yet be suppressed.

## The Siege of Exeter

(FRANCIS BACON)

[Francis Bacon (1561-1626), afterwards Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper under Elizabeth, himself rose to be Lord Keeper and Chancellor. Censured and deprived of his offices in 1621, on a charge of corruption, Bacon spent his remaining years in literary work. His *Essays* are still widely read. The passage which follows is from his *History of King Henry VII*]

HE [Perkin Warbeck] arrived in September at Whitsand Bay, and forthwith came to Bodmin. . . . There he set forth a new proclamation, stroking the people with fair promises, and humouring them with invectives against the king and his government. . . . His council advised him by all means to make himself master of some good walled town, as well to make his men find the sweetness of rich spoils, and to allure to him all loose and lost people, by like hopes of booty ; as to be a sure retreat to his forces, in case they should have any ill day, or unlucky chance in the field. Wherefore they took heart to them, and went on, and besieged the city of Exeter, the principal town for strength and wealth in those parts.

When they were come before Exeter they forbore to use any force at the first, but made continual shouts and outcries to terrify the inhabitants. They did like-

wise in divers places call and talk to them from under the walls, to join with them, and be of their party ; telling them that the king would make them another London, if they would be the first town that would acknowledge him. But they had not the wit to send to them, in any orderly fashion, agents or chosen men, to tempt them and to treat with them. The citizens on their part shewed themselves stout and loyal subjects : neither was there so much as any tumult or division amongst them, but all prepared themselves for a valiant defence, and making good the town. For well they saw, that the rebels were of no such number or power, that they needed to fear them as yet ; and well they hoped, that before their numbers increased, the king's succours would come in. And, howsoever, they thought it the extremest of evils, to put themselves at the mercy of those hungry and disorderly people. Wherefore setting all things in good order within the town, they nevertheless let down with cords, from several parts of the walls privily, several messengers, that if one came to mischance, another might pass on, which should advertise the king of the state of the town, and implore his aid. Perkin also doubted, that succours would come ere long ; and therefore resolved to use his utmost force to assault the town. And for that purpose having mounted scaling-ladders in divers places upon the walls, made at the same instant an attempt to force one of the gates. But having no artillery nor engines, and finding that he could do no good by ramming with logs of timber, nor by the use of iron bars, and iron crows, and such other means at hand, he had no way left him but to set one of the gates on fire, which he did. But the citizens well perceiving the danger, before the gate could be fully consumed, blocked up the gate, and some space about it on the inside, with faggots and other fuel, which they likewise set on fire, and so repulsed fire with fire ; and in the meantime raised up ram-

piers of earth, and cast up deep trenches, to serve instead of wall and gate. And for the scaladoes, they had so bad success, as the rebels were driven from the walls with the loss of two hundred men. . . .

And the king, who commonly drew blood, as physicians do, rather to save life than to spill it, and was never cruel when he was secure ; now he saw the danger was past, pardoned them all in the end, except some few desperate persons, which he reserved to be executed, the better to set off his mercy toward the rest . . . and made a joyful entrance into Exeter, where he gave the citizens great commendations and thanks ; and taking the sword he wore from his side, he gave it to the mayor, and commanded it should be ever after carried before him.

### The Merry Bells of Oxford

[From *The Loyal Garland, or Poesie for Kings*, 1624 ;  
reprinted by the Percy Society, 1850 ]

OH the merry Christ-Church bells,  
One, two, three, four, five, six ;  
They troll so wondrous deep,  
So woundy sweet,  
And they chime so merrily, merrily.  
Hark the first and second bell,  
And every day by four and ten  
Cries, Come, come, come, come, come to prayers,  
And the vergers troop before the deans :  
Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, goes the little bell,  
To call in every soul ;  
But the devil a man  
Will leave his can,  
Till they hear the mighty toll.



## Herrick's Return to London

(ROBERT HERRICK)

[Robert Herrick (1591-1634) was born in Cheapside, London, and educated at Cambridge. Entering the Church, he became Vicar of Dean Prior, in Devonshire, but in 1627 was ejected owing to the hostility of the Puritans. In 1632, however, he was restored to his living. His *Hesperides* contains many beautiful lyrics. Herrick was a genuine lover of the life of cities.]

FROM the dull confines of the drooping West,  
To see the day spring from the pregnant East,  
Ravished in spirit, I come, nay more, I fly  
To thee, blest place of my nativity !  
Thus, thus with hallowed foot I touch the ground,  
With thousand blessings by thy fortune crowned.  
O fruitful genius ! that bestowest here  
An everlasting plenty, year by year.  
O place ! O people ! manners ! framed to please  
All nations, customs, kindreds, languages !  
I am a free-born Roman ; suffer then  
That I amongst you live a citizen.  
London my home is : though by hard fate sent  
Into a long and irksome banishment,  
Yet since called back, henceforward let me be,  
O native country, repossessed by thee !  
For rather than I'll to the West return  
I'll beg of thee first here to have mine urn.  
Weak I am grown, and must in short time fall ;  
Give thou my sacred relics burial.

## The Long Vacation in London

(SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT)

[Davenant was born in 1605. His father kept the Crown Tavern at Oxford, and he was educated at the Grammar School of All Saints there. In 1621, when his father became Mayor of Oxford, he appeared at Court as page to Frances, Duchess of Richmond. On the death of Ben Jonson, Poet Laureate, the Queen procured for Davenant the vacant laurel. He fought on the Royalist side in the Civil War, and obtained his knighthood for service rendered at the siege of Gloucester; but was afterwards captured and imprisoned. It is said that Milton obtained his release—a kindness he was able to repay after the Restoration by preserving Milton from the resentment of the Court. His chief work is *Gondibert*, in which occur the famous lines beginning,—

“ Praise is devotion, fit for mighty mindes ”

He died in 1668, and on his monument in Westminster Abbey are the words (recalling the epitaph of his predecessor), “ O rare Sir William Davenant ”. In the extract below he paints a picnic at Islington, and a travelling puppet-show and circus ]

Now town-wit sayes to witty friend,  
 “ Transcribe apace all thou hast pen'd ;  
 For I in journey hold it fit  
 To cry thee up to country-wit.  
 Our mules are come ! dissolve the club !  
 The word, till term, is ‘ Rub, O rub ! ’ ”

Now gamester poor, in cloak of stammel,  
 Mounted on steed as slow as camel,  
 Early in morn does sneak from town  
 Lest landlord's wife should seize on crown ;  
 On crown, which he in pouch does keep,  
 When day is done to pay for sleep.

Now damsel young, that dwells in Cheap,  
For very joy begins to leap :  
Her elbow small she oft does rub  
Tickled with hope of sillabub !  
For mother (who does gold maintain  
On thumbe, and keys in silver chaine)  
In snow white clout wrapt nook of pye,  
Fat capon's-wing, and rabbit's thigh,  
And said to hackney-coachman, " Go,  
Take shillings six, say I, or no."  
" Whither ? " says he. Quoth she, " Thy teame  
Shall drive to place where groweth creame."

But husband grey now comes to stall,  
For prentice notch'd he straight does call :  
" Where's dame ? " quoth he. Quoth son of shop,  
" She's gone her cake in milk to sop."  
" Ho, ho ! to Islington ! enough !  
Fetch Job, my son, and our dog Ruffe !  
For there in pond, through mire and muck,  
We'll cry, ' Hay, duck ! there, Ruffe ! hay, duck ! ' " . . .

Now Spynie, Ralph and Gregorie small,  
And short-hair'd Stephen, whey-fac'd Paul  
(Whose times are out, indentures torn,  
Who seven long years did never scorn  
To fetch up coales for maid to use,  
Wipe mistresses' and children's shoes)  
Do jump for joy they are made free ;  
Hire meagre steeds, to ride and see  
Their parents old, who dwell as near  
As place call'd Peake in Derby-shire.  
There they alight, old crones are milde,  
Each weeps on cragg of pretty childe :  
They portions give, trades up to set,  
That babes may live, serve God, and cheat. . . .

*Sillabub*, Dish made of cream mixed with wine into soft curd—a sort of trifle.

Now vaulter good, and dancing lass  
 On rope, and man that cries " Hey, pass,"  
 And tumbler young that needs but stoop,  
 Lay head to heel, to creep through hoop ;  
 And man in chimney hid to dress  
 Puppet that acts our old Queen Bess,  
 And man that, whilst the puppets play,  
 Through nose expoundeth what they say,  
 And white oate-eater that doth dwell  
 In stable small, at sign of Bell,  
 That lifts up hoof to show the pranks  
 Taught by magician, stiled Banks ;  
 And ape, led captive still in chaine  
 Till he renounce the Pope and Spain :  
 All these on hoof now trudge from town  
 To cheat poor turnip-eating clown. . . .

But stay, my frightened pen is fled ;  
 Myself through fear creep under bed ;  
 For just as Muse would scribble more  
 Fierce city dun did rap at door.

## A Barber

(SIR JOHN SUCKLING)

[Though his family hailed from Norwich, of which his grandfather, Robert Suckling, was mayor, John Suckling was born at Whitton, in Middlesex, in 1609. He was a prodigy even for that age, and could speak Latin at five and write it at nine. At twenty he joined the army of Gustavus Adolphus, and was present at three battles and five sieges within six months. In the Civil War he raised a troop of horse for the King. As a poet he wrote rather for amusement than for fame. Suckling died in 1641.]

I AM a barber, and, I'd have you know,  
 A shaver too sometimes, no mad one tho'.

The reason why you see me now thus bare  
Is 'cause I always trade against the hair :  
But yet I keep a state : who comes to me,  
Whoe'er he is, he must uncover'd be.  
When I'm at work, I'm bound to find discourse  
To no great purpose, of great Sweden's force  
Of Witel, and the burse, and what 'twill cost  
To get that back which was this summer lost.  
So fall to praising of his Lordship's hair ;  
Ne'er so deform'd, I swear 'tis sans compare :  
I tell him that the king's does sit no fuller,  
And yet his is not half so good a colour :  
Then reach a pleasing glass, that's made to lye,  
Like to its master, most notoriously .  
And if he must his mistress see that day,  
I with a powder send him straight away.

## News from Newcastle

(JOHN CLEVELAND)

[Cleveland was born at Loughborough, where his father was curate of the parish and assistant master at the Grammar School, in 1613. In 1621 his father became Vicar of Hinckley, and John was educated at Hinckley Grammar School and later at Christ's College (Milton's college), Cambridge, becoming a Fellow of St John's College in 1631. Being a strong Royalist, he migrated to Oxford when a Parliamentary garrison made Cambridge unwholesome for him. He became Judge Advocate of Newark, and was present at the siege Little is known of his life for the next decade. Then he was imprisoned at Yarmouth, but was released by Cromwell's order. He died at Gray's Inn on April 29, 1658. He is one of the minor Caroline poets, but was very popular in his

*Sweden's force.* The Thirty Years War, 1618-48, was in full swing. Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, entered the war in 1630.

day. Moralists like to repeat how Cleveland had twenty editions while Milton's *Minor Poems* had two. As a man Cleveland seems to have deserved favour. He was an honest and consistent upholder of his principles. His satires on the Roundheads explain their fear of his "abilities" In the most famous of them, *The Rebel Scot*, the following long-remembered couplet occurs :—

"Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his doom,  
Not forced him wander, but confined him home"]

ENGLAND'S a perfect world, has Indies too ;  
Correct your maps, Newcastle is Peru !  
Let th' haughty Spaniard triumph till 'tis told  
Our sooty min'rals purify his gold.  
This will sublime and hatch the abortive ore,  
When the sun tires and stars can do no more.  
No ! mines are current, unrefined, and gross ;  
Coals make the sterling, Nature but the dross. . . .

Nay, what's the sun but, in a different name,  
A coal-pit rampant, or a mine on flame ?  
Then let this truth reciprocally run,  
The sun's Heaven's coalery, and coals our sun ;  
A sun that scorches not, locked up i' th' deep ;  
The bandog's chained, the lion is asleep.  
That tyrant fire, which uncontrolled doth rage,  
Here's calm and hushed, like Bajazet i' the cage.  
For in each coal-pit there doth couchant dwell  
A muzzled Etna, or an innocent Hell.  
Kindle the cloud, you'll lightning then descry ;  
Then will a day break from the gloomy sky ;  
Then you'll unbutton though December blow,  
And sweat i' th' midst of icicles and snow ;  
The dog-days then at Christmas. Thus is all  
The year made June and equinoctial. . . .

But see a fleet of rivals trim and fine,  
To court the rich infanta of our mine ;

Hundreds of grim Leanders dare confront,  
For this loved Hero, the loud Hellespont. . . .  
Thus went those gallant heroes of old Greece,  
The Argonauts, in quest o' th' Golden Fleece.  
But oh ! these bring it with 'em and conspire  
To pawn that idol for our smoke and fire.  
Silver's but ballast ; this they bring ashore  
That they may treasure up our better ore.  
For this they venture rocks and storms, defy  
All the extremities of sea and sky.  
For the glad purchase of this precious mould,  
Cowards dare pirates, misers part with gold.  
Hence 'tis that when the doubtful ship sets forth  
The knowing needle still directs it North,  
And Nature's secret wonder, to attest  
Our Indies' worth, discards both East and West.

For 'tis not only fire commands this spring,  
A coal-pit is a mine of everything.  
We sink a jack-of-all-trades shop, and sound  
An inversed Burse, an Exchange under ground.  
This Proteus earth converts to what you'd ha' 't ;  
Now you may weave 't to silk, then coin 't to  
plate,  
And, what 's a metamorphosis more dear,  
Dissolve it and 'twill melt to London beer.  
For whatsoe'er that gaudy city boasts,  
Each month derives to these attractive coasts.  
We shall exhaust their chamber and devour  
Their treasures of Guildhall, the Mint, the Tower.  
Our staiths their mortgaged streets will soon divide,  
Blathon owe Cornhill, Stella share Cheapside.  
Thus will our coal-pits' charity and pity  
At distance undermine and fire the City. . . .

*Blathon owe Cornhill*, Blathon (now Blaydon, the mining district)  
own Cornhill

*Stella*, Stella Hall was near Blaydon ; it was a nunnery, but after  
the Dissolution passed into the hands of the Tempests.

To all defects the coal-heap brings a cure,  
Gives life to age and raiment to the poor.  
Pride first wore clothes ; Nature disdains attire ;  
She made us naked 'cause she gave us fire.  
Full wharfs are wardrobes, and the tailor's charm  
Belongs to th' collier ; he must keep us warm.  
The quilted alderman with all 's array  
Finds but cold comfort on a frosty day ;  
Girt, wrapped, and muffled, yet with all that stir  
Scarce warm when smoth' red in his drowsy fur ;  
Not proof against keen Winter's batteries  
Should he himself wear all 's own liveries,  
But chilblains under silver spurs bewails  
And in embroid' red buckskins blows his nails.

Rich meadows and full crops are elsewhere  
found :

We can reap harvest from our barren ground.  
The bald parched hills that circumscribe our Tyne  
Are no less fruitful in their hungry mine.  
Their unfledged tops so well content our palates,  
We envy none their nose-gays and their sallets.  
A gay rank soil like a young gallant grows  
And spends itself that it may wear fine clothes,  
Whilst all its worth is to its back confined.  
Our wear 's plain outside, but is richly lined. . . .  
Rocks own no spring, are pregnant with no  
showers,  
Crystals and gems grow there instead of flowers ;  
Instead of roses, beds of rubies sweat  
And emeralds recompense the violet.



## The Great Fire of London, 1666

(JOHN EVELYN)

[John Evelyn (1620-1706) filled more than one public office during the reign of Charles II. But he is better remembered as the author of a valuable *Diary*, which throws much light on the events of his time. Grave and stately in tone, it is a great contrast to the *Diary* of his friend, Samuel Pepys. Evelyn also wrote on gardens and on architecture. The account which follows of the Great Fire of London, 1666, was taken from his *Diary*]

*2nd September.*—This fatal night, about ten, began the deplorable fire, near Fish-street, in London.

*3rd.*—I had public prayers at home. The fire continuing, after dinner I took coach with my wife and son, and went to the Bankside in Southwark, where we beheld that dismal spectacle, the whole city in dreadful flames near the waterside; all the houses from the Bridge, all Thames-street, and upwards towards Cheapside, down to the Three Cranes, were now consumed; and so returned, exceeding astonished what would become of the rest.

The fire having continued all this night (if I may call that night which was light as day for ten miles round about, after a dreadful manner), when conspiring with a fierce eastern wind in a very dry season, I went on foot to the same place; and saw the whole south part of the City burning from Cheapside to the Thames, and all along Cornhill (for it likewise kindled back against the wind as well as forward), Tower-street, Fenchurch-street, Gracious-street, and so along to Baynard's Castle, and was now taking hold of St. Paul's Church, to which the scaffolds contributed exceedingly. The conflagration was so universal, and the people so astonished, that, from the beginning, I know not by what despondency, or fate, they hardly

stirred to quench it ; so that there was nothing heard, or seen, but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods ; such a strange consternation there was upon them, so as it burned both in breadth and length, the churches, public halls, Exchange, hospitals, monuments, and ornaments ; leaping after a prodigious manner, from house to house, and street to street, at great distances one from the other. For the heat, with a long set of fair and warm weather, had even ignited the air, and prepared the materials to conceive the fire, which devoured, after an incredible manner, houses, furniture, and everything. Here, we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on the other side, the carts, etc., carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewn with moveables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle ! such as haply the world had not seen since the foundation of it, nor can be outdone till the universal conflagration thereof. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above forty miles roundabout for many nights. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above 10,000 houses all in one flame ! The noise and cracking and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like a hideous storm ; and the air all about so hot and inflamed, that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still, and let the flames burn on, which they did, for near two miles in length, and one in breadth. The clouds also of smoke were dismal, and reached, upon computation, near fifty miles in length. Thus, I left it this afternoon burning,

a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. It forcibly called to my mind that passage—*non enim hic habemus stabilem civitatem*: the ruins resembling the picture of Troy. London was, but is no more! Thus, I returned.

4th September.—The burning still rages, and it is now gotten as far as the Inner Temple. All Fleet-street, the Old Bailey, Ludgate-hill, Warwick-lane, Newgate, Paul's-chain, Watling-street, now flaming, and most of it reduced to ashes; the stones of Paul's flew like grenades, the melting lead running down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with fiery redness, so as no horse, nor man, was able to tread on them, and the demolition had stopped all the passages, so that no help could be applied. The eastern wind still more impetuously driving the flames forward. Nothing but the Almighty power of God was able to stop them; for vain was the help of man.

5th September.—It crossed towards Whitehall; but oh! the confusion there was then at that Court! It pleased his Majesty to command me, among the rest, to look after the quenching of Fetter-lane end, to preserve (if possible) that part of Holborn, whilst the rest of the gentlemen took their several posts, some at one part, and some at another (for now they began to bestir themselves, and not till now, who hitherto had stood as men intoxicated, with their hands across), and began to consider that nothing was likely to put a stop but the blowing up of so many houses as might make a wider gap than any had yet been made by the ordinary method of pulling them down with engines. This some stout seamen proposed early enough to have saved near the whole City, but this some tenacious and avaricious men, aldermen, etc., would not permit, because their houses must have been of the first. It was, therefore, now commended to be practised; and my concern being particularly for the Hospital of St. Bartholomew, near Smithfield, where I had many

wounded and sick men, made me the more diligent to promote it ; nor was my care for the Savoy less. It now pleased God, by abating the wind, and by the industry of the people, when almost all was lost infusing a new spirit into them, that the fury of it began sensibly to abate about noon, so as it came no farther than the Temple westwards, nor than the entrance of Smithfield, north : but continued all this day and night so impetuous towards Cripplegate and the Tower, as made us all despair. It also brake out again in the Temple ; but the courage of the multitude persisting, and many houses being blown up, such gaps and desolations were soon made, as, with the former three days' consumption, the back fire did not so vehemently urge upon the rest as formerly. There was yet no standing near the burning and glowing ruins by near a furlong's space.

The coal and wood-wharfs, and magazines of oil, rosin, etc., did infinite mischief, so as the invective which a little before I had dedicated to his Majesty and published, giving warning what probably might be the issue of suffering those shops to be in the City, was looked upon as a prophecy.

The poor inhabitants were dispersed about St. George's Fields, and Moorfields, as far as Highgate, and several miles in circle, some under tents, some under miserable huts and hovels, many without a rag, or any necessary utensils, bed or board, who from delicateness, riches, and easy accommodations in stately and well-furnished houses, were now reduced to extremest misery and poverty.

In this calamitous condition, I returned with a sad heart to my house, blessing and adoring the distinguishing mercy of God to me and mine, who, in the midst of all this ruin, was like Lot, in my little Zoar, safe and sound.

*6th September.*—Thursday. I represented to his Majesty the case of the French prisoners at war in my

custody, and besought him that there might be still the same care of watching at all places contiguous to unseized houses. It is not indeed imaginable how extraordinary the vigilance and activity of the King and Duke was, even labouring in person, and being present to command, order, reward, or encourage workmen ; by which he showed his affection to his people, and gained theirs. Having, then, disposed of some under cure at the Savoy, I returned to Whitehall, where I dined at Mr. Offley's, the groom porter, who was my relation.

*7th.*—I went this morning on foot from Whitehall as far as London Bridge, through the late Fleet-street, Ludgate-hill by St. Paul's, Cheapside, Exchange, Bishopsgate, Aldersgate, and out to Moor-fields, thence through Cornhill, etc., with extraordinary difficulty, clambering over heaps of yet smoking rubbish, and frequently mistaking where I was : the ground under my feet so hot, that it even burnt the soles of my shoes. In the meantime, his Majesty got to the Tower by water, to demolish the houses about the graff, which, being built entirely about it, had they taken fire and attacked the White Tower, where the magazine of powder lay, would undoubtedly not only have beaten down and destroyed all the bridge, but sunk and torn the vessels in the river, and rendered the demolition beyond all expression for several miles about the country.

At my return, I was infinitely concerned to find that goodly Church, St. Paul's—now a sad ruin, and that beautiful portico (for structure comparable to any in Europe, as not long before repaired by the late King) now rent in pieces, flakes of large stones split asunder, and nothing remaining entire but the inscription in the architrave, showing by whom it was built, which had not one letter of it defaced ! It was astonishing to see what immense stones the heat had in a manner calcined, so that all the ornaments,

columns, friezes, capitals, and projectures of massy Portland stone, flew off, even to the very roof, where a sheet of lead covering a great space (no less than six acres by measure) was totally melted. The ruins of the vaulted roof falling, broke into St. Faith's, which being filled with the magazines of books belonging to the Stationers, and carried thither for safety, they were all consumed, burning for a week following. It is also observable that the lead over the altar at the east end was untouched, and among the divers monuments the body of one bishop remained entire. Thus lay in ashes that most venerable church, one of the most ancient pieces of early piety in the Christian world, besides near one hundred more. The lead, iron-work, bells, plate, etc., melted, the exquisitely wrought Mercers' Chapel, the sumptuous Exchange, the august fabric of Christ Church, all the rest of the Companies' Halls, splendid buildings, arches, entries, all in dust; the fountains dried up and ruined, whilst the very waters remained boiling, the voragoes of subterranean cellars, wells, and dungeons, formerly warehouses, still burning in stench and dark clouds of smoke; so that in five or six miles traversing about I did not see one load of timber unconsumed, nor many stones but what were calcined white as snow.

The people, who now walked about the ruins, appeared like men in some dismal desert, or rather, in some great city laid waste by a cruel enemy, to which was added the stench that came from some poor creatures' bodies, beds, and other combustible goods. Sir Thomas Gresham's statue, though fallen from its niche in the Royal Exchange, remained entire, when all those of the Kings since the Conquest were broken to pieces. Also the standard in Cornhill, and Queen Elizabeth's effigies, with some arms on Ludgate, continued with but little detriment, whilst the vast iron chains of the City streets, hinges, bars and

gates of prisons, were many of them melted and reduced to cinders by the vehement heat. Nor was I yet able to pass through any of the narrow streets, but kept the widest ; the ground and air, smoke and fiery vapour, continued so intense, that my hair was almost singed, and my feet unsufferably surbated. The bye-lanes and narrow streets were quite filled up with rubbish ; nor could one have possibly known where he was, but by the ruins of some Church, or Hall, that had some remarkable tower, or pinnacle remaining.

I then went towards Islington and Highgate, where one might have seen 200,000 people of all ranks and degrees dispersed, and lying along by their heaps of what they could save from the fire, deploring their loss ; and, though ready to perish for hunger and destitution, yet not asking one penny for relief, which to me appeared a stranger sight than any I had yet beheld. His Majesty and Council indeed took all imaginable care for their relief, by proclamation for the country to come in, and refresh them with provisions.

*10th September.*—I went again to the ruins ; for it was now no longer a city.

## A Fortnight of London Life, 1660

(SAMUEL PEPYS)

[Samuel Pepys, most entertaining of all diarists, was born in 1633, and educated at St. Paul's School and Cambridge. After the Restoration of Charles II. he became a member of the Navy Board, and in 1673 rose to be Secretary, an office which, save for a three years' break, he held till the Revolution. Pepys was President of the Royal Society, and a warm friend of many scholars. But his fame survives because of his immortal *Diary*, deciphered in 1819. In this remarkable journal, which

runs from 1660 to 1669, Pepys records an amazing variety of public and private matters; and it is in his pages that the most faithful picture of London life in that age is to be found. Pepys died in 1703.]

*December 1st.*—This morning observing some things to be laid up not as they should be by my girl, I took a broom and basted her till she cried extremely, which made me vexed; but, before I went out, I left her appeased. Went to my Lord St. Albans' lodgings, and found him in bed, talking to a priest (he looked like one), that leaned along over the side of the bed; and there I desired to know his mind about making the Katch stay longer, which I got ready for him the other day. He seems to be a fine, civil gentleman. There fell into our company old Mr. Flower and another gentleman, who did tell us how a Scotch knight was killed basely the other day at the Fleece in Covent Garden, where there had been a great many formerly killed.

*2nd* (Lord's day).—To church, and Mr Mills made a good sermon: so home to dinner. My wife and I all alone to a leg of mutton, the sawce of which being made sweet, I was angry at it, and eat none, but only dined upon the marrow-bone that we had beside.

*3rd.*—I rose by candle, and spent my morning in fiddling till time to go to the office. Come in my cozen Snow by chance, and I had a very good capon to dinner. So to the office again till night, and so home, and then come Mr. Davis of Deptford (the first time that ever he was at my house), and after him Monsieur L'Impertinent [Mr. Butler], who is to go to Ireland to-morrow, and so come to take his leave of me. They both found me under the barber's hand, but I had a bottle of good sack in the house, and so made them very wellcome.

*4th.*—To the Duke of York, and he tooke us into his closet, and we did open to him our project of stopping the growing charge of our fleet, by paying



them in hand one moyety, and the other four months hence. This he do like. This day the Parliament voted that the bodies of Oliver, Ireton, Bradshaw, and Thomas Pride, should be taken up out of their graves in the Abbey, and drawn to the gallows, and there hanged and buried under it : which (methinks) do trouble me that a man of so great courage as he was should have that dishonour, though otherwise he might deserve it enough.

5th.—After dinner went to the New Theatre [Killigrew's], and there I saw *The Merry Wives of Windsor* acted—the humours of the country gentleman and the French doctor very well done, but the rest but very poorly, and Sir J. Falstaffe as bad as any.

6th.—To my Lord, who told me of his going out of town to-morrow to settle the militia in Huntingdonshire, and did desire me to lay up a box of some rich jewels and things that there [are] in it, which I promised to do. After much free discourse with my Lord, who tells me his mind as to his enlarging his family, etc., and desiring me to look him out a Master of the Horse, and other servants, we parted.

7th.—To the Privy Seale, where I signed a deadly number of pardons, which do trouble me to get nothing by. I fell a-reading *Fuller's History of Abbys*, and my wife in Great Cyrus till twelve at night, and so to bed.

9th (Lord's day).—Being called up early by Sir W. Batten, rose and went to his house, and he told me the ill news that he had this morning from Woolwich—that the *Assurance* (formerly Captain Holland's ship, and now Captain Stoakes's, designed for Guiny, and manned and victualled) was by a gust of wind sunk down to the bottom. Twenty men drowned. Sir Williams went by barge thither to see how things are, and I am sent to the Duke of York to tell him. I went to the Duke, and first calling upon Mr. Coventry at his chamber, I went to the

Duke's bedside, who had sat up late last night, and lay long this morning. This being done, I went to chapel, and sat in Mr. Blaggrave's pew, and there did sing my part along with another before the King, and with much ease. I met with a letter from my Lord, commanding me to go to Mr. Denham, to get a man to go to him to-morrow to Hinchingbroke, to contrive with him about some alterations in his house, which I did, and got Mr. Kennard. Dined with my Lady, and had infinite of talk of all kind of things, especially of beauty of men and women, with which she seems to be much pleased to talk of. With Mr. Kennard to my Lady, who is much pleased with him, and after a glass of sack there, we parted, having taken order for a horse or two for him and his servant to be gone to-morrow. Thence home, whence I hear that the Comptroller had some business with me, and he shewed me a design of his, by the King's making an Order of Knights of the Sea, to give an encouragement for persons of honour to undertake the service of the Sea, and he had done it with great pains, and very ingeniously.

10th.—Up exceedingly early to go to the Comptroller, but he not being up, and it being a very fine, bright, moonshine morning, I went and walked all alone twenty turnes in Cornhill, from Gracechurch Street corner to the Stockes, and back again. It is expected that the Duke will marry the Lord Chancellor's daughter at last ; which is likely to be the ruine of Mr. Davis and my Lord Barkley [of Stratton], who have carried themselves so high against the Chancellor.

11th.—My wife and I up very early this day, and though the weather was very bad, and the wind high, yet my Lady Batten and her mayde, and we two, did go by our barge to Woolwich (my Lady being very fearfull), where we found both Sir Williams, and much other company, expecting the weather to be better, that they might go about weighing up the

*Assurance*, which lies there (poor ship, that I have been twice merry in, in Captain Holland's time) under water, only the upper deck may be seen, and the masts. Captain Stoakes is very melancholy, and being in search for some clothes and money of his, which he says he hath lost out of his cabin, I did the first office of a Justice of Peace to examine a seaman thereupon, but could find no reason to commit him. This last tide the *Kingsale* was also run aboard, and lost her mainmast, by another ship, which makes us think it ominous to the Guiny voyage, to have two of her ships spoilt before they go out. After dinner, my Lady being very fearfull, she staid and kept my wife there, and I and another gentleman, a friend of Sir W. Pen's, went back in the barge, very merry by the way, as far as White Hall in her. Mr. Moore hath persuaded me to put out 250*l.* for 50*l.* per annum for eight years, and I think I shall do it.

12*th.*—To the Exchequer, and did give my mother Bowyer a visit, and her daughters, the first time that I did see them since I went last to sea. My father did offer me six pieces of gold in lieu of six pounds that he borrowed of me the other day, but it went against me to take it of him, and therefore did not. Home and to bed, reading myself asleep, while the wench sat mending my breeches by my bedside.

14*th.*—The Comptroller told me among other persons that were heretofore the principal officers of the Navy, there was one Sir Peter Buck, a Clerk of the Acts, of which to myself I was not a little proud.

16*th.*—In the afternoon I went to White Hall, where I was surprised with the news of a plot against the King's person and my Lord Monk's; and that since last night there are about forty taken up on suspicion; and, amongst others, it was my lot to meet with Simon Beale, the Trumpeter, who took me and Tom Doling into the Guard in Scotland Yard, and shewed us Major-General Overton. Here I heard him

deny that he is guilty of any such things ; but that whereas it is said that he is found to have brought many armes to towne, he says it is only to sell them, as he will prove by oath. To my Lady's, and staid with her an hour or two, talking of the Duke of York and his lady, the Chancellor's daughter, between whom, she tells me, that all is agreed, and he will marry her. But I know not how true yet.

## An Author on Tour

(DANIEL DEFOE)

[Daniel Defoe (1659-1731) was a man of prodigious activity and of fearless nature, which in those intolerant days exposed a writer of independent mind to considerable risk. During his career he experienced both the pillory and the prison. His greatest title to literary fame is the fact that he wrote *Robinson Crusoe*, but many of his other works are of considerable merit. His writing, both in prose and verse, was marked by a plain unadorned directness, which, while possessing its limitations, is so luminous and cogent that Defoe more than once succeeded in making fiction appear as solid fact. This direct style, varied by occasional caustic comments, is well exemplified in these extracts from his *Tour through Great Britain*. The tour was undertaken in 1724-6.]

### Coventry

COVENTRY is a large and populous city, and drives a very great trade ; the manufacture of tammies is their chief employ, and next to that, weaving of ribbons of the meanest kind, chiefly black. The buildings are very old, and in some places much decayed ; the timber-built houses project forwards, and towards one another, till in the narrow streets they are ready to touch one another at the top ; a method of building formerly much practised in London.

The tale of the Lady Godiva, who rode naked through the High Street of this city, to purchase her beloved city of Coventry exemption from taxes, is held for so certain a truth, that they will not have it questioned upon any account whatsoever ; and the picture of the poor fellow who peeped out of the window to see her, is still kept up, looking out of a garret in the High Street of the city : but Mr. Camden says positively, nobody looked at her at all. Two parliaments have been held in this city, and both remarkably denominated ; one in the 6th of Henry IV. called *Parliamentum Indocorum* ; the other in the 38th of Henry VI. called *Parliamentum Diabolicum*, because of the Attainder passed in it against the House of York and its partisans.

At the Restoration of King Charles II. the walls and towers of the city were demolished, by that Prince's command, and only the gates of it left standing ; by which the beauty and strength of the rest may be guessed at.

### Nottingham

Nottingham is one of the most pleasant and beautiful towns in England. The situation makes it so, though the additions to it were not to be named.

It is seated on the side of a hill overlooking a fine range of meadows about a mile broad, a little rivulet running on the North side of them, almost close to the town ; and the noble river Trent parallel with both on the farther or South side of the meadows. Over the Trent there is a stately stone bridge of nineteen arches, where the river is very large and deep, having a little above received the addition of the Dove, the Derwent, the Irwash, and the Soar, three of them very great rivers of themselves, and all falling into the Trent after its passing by Burton, in Staffordshire.

The town of Nottingham is situated upon the steep ascent of a sandy rock, which is the more remarkable

for that it is so soft, that they easily work into it to make vaults and cellars, and yet so firm as to support the roofs of these cellars two or three under one another, the stairs into which are all cut out of the solid, though crumbling rock. And we must not fail to have it remembered, that the inhabitants generally keep these cellars well stocked with excellent ale, which they are very bountiful in bestowing among their friends, as some in our company experienced to a degree not fit to be a matter of history. . . .

Besides the situation of Nottingham towards the river, it is most pleasantly seated to the land side, towards the forest on the North of the town. Here they have a most pleasant plain to accommodate the gentlemen who assemble once a year for the manly noble diversion of horse races, at which season there used to be a great concourse of Quality : not Bansted Down, or Newmarket Heath could boast of a better company of horses. But of late years, for what reason I will not pretend to determine, they have been less frequented. . . .

The beauties of Nottingham, next to its situation, are the Castle, Market-place, and the Gardens of Count Tallard, who, in his confinement here as prisoner of war taken by the Duke of Marlborough at the glorious Battle of Blenheim, amused himself with making a small but beautiful parterre after the French manner : but it does not gain, by English keeping.

### Doncaster

Doncaster (so called from the river on which it stands and the Castle which is now ruined), is a noble, large, spacious town, exceeding populous, and a great manufacturing town, principally for knitting ; and, as it stands upon the great Northern Post road, is very full of great Inns. Our landlord at the Post-house was Mayor of the town as well as Post-master, kept a pack

of hounds, and was company for the best gentlemen in the neighbourhood. . . .

Here we saw the first remains of the great Roman highway, which, though we could not perceive before, were eminent and remarkable just at the entrance into the town, and soon after appeared in many places. Here are also two great, lofty and very strong stone bridges over the Don, and a long causeway also beyond the bridges, which is not a little dangerous to passengers when the waters of the Don are restrained, and swell over its banks, as is sometimes the case.

This town, Mr. Camden says, "was burnt entirely to the ground *anno* 759 and is hardly recovered yet." But it now looks more decayed by time than accident, and the houses which seem ready to fall, might rise again to more advantage after another conflagration.

### Proud Preston

Preston is a fine town, and tolerably full of people, but not like Liverpool or Manchester, for we now come beyond the trading part of the county. But though there is no manufacture, the town is full of Attorneys, Proctors and Notaries, the process of Law being here of a different nature from that in other places, by reason that it is a Duchy and County Palatine, and has particular privileges of its own. The people are gay here, though not perhaps the richer for that ; but it has, on this account, obtained the name of Proud Preston. Here is a great deal of good company, but not so much, they say, as was before the late bloody action with the Northern rebels ; not that the battle hurt many of the immediate inhabitants, but the consequences of it so severely affected many families thereabout, that they still retain the remembrance of it. 'Tis somewhat remarkable that the Scots had been formerly defeated near this place by Cromwell.

## Halifax

Having passed the Calder at Sorby Bridge, I now began to approach the town of Halifax, which with all its dependencies, is not perhaps to be equalled. The Parish, or Vicarage, for it is but a Vicarage, is, if not the largest, certainly the most populous in England, and yet is out of the way of Courts, Sea Ports, and Foreign Trade.

The extent of it, they tell us, is almost circular, and about twelve miles in diameter. It has twelve or thirteen Chapels of Ease, besides about sixteen Meeting-houses, which they call also Chapels, being conformable in fashion to them, having bells and Burying-ground to most of them, or else they bury within them. I think they told me the Quakers' Meeting, of which there are several too, are not reckoned into the number. In a word, it is some years ago since a Reverend Clergyman of the town of Halifax told me they reckoned they had a hundred thousand Communicants in the Parish, besides children. . . .

But I must not leave Halifax yet ; as the Vicarage is thus far extended, and so populous, what must the market be which supplies this vast number of inhabitants ? As to corn, I have observed already they sow little, and they feed very few oxen or sheep ; and as they are surrounded with large manufacturing towns on every side, all of them employed, like themselves, in the clothing trade, they must necessarily have their provisions from other parts of the country.

The consequence then is plain : their corn comes up in great quantities out of Lincoln, Nottingham, and the East Riding ; their black cattle from thence and from Lancashire ; their sheep and mutton from the adjacent counties every way ; their butter from the East and North Ridings ; and their cheese out of Cheshire and Warwickshire.



The markets in the months of September and October are prodigiously thronged, that being the time when the clothiers buy up as many oxen as will serve their family for the whole year, which they drive home, kill, salt, and hang up in the smoke to dry. This was heretofore their common dish ; but, not so much through luxury as frugality, they now live more upon fresh meats.

Thus one trading manufacturing part of the country in a barren soil gives and receives support from all the countries round it.

As for the town of Halifax itself, there is nothing extraordinary, except on a Market Day, and then indeed the multitude of people who resort to it, as well to sell their manufactures as to buy provisions, is prodigious ; nothing except Leeds and Wakefield, in all the North part of England, comes near it.

### Lincoln in 1725

Lincoln is an ancient, ragged, decayed city ; it is so full of the ruins of Monasteries and Religious Houses that, in short, the very barns, stables, out-houses, and, as they shewed me, some of the very hog-styes, were built church-fashion ; that is to say, with stone walls and arched windows and doors . . .

The situation of the city is very particular ; one part is on the flat and in a bottom, so that the Witham, a little river that runs through the town, flows sometimes into the street ; the other part lies upon the top of a high hill, where the Cathedral stands ; and the very steepest part of the ascent of the hill is the best part of the city for trade and business.

Nothing is more troublesome than the communication of the upper and lower town ; the street is so steep and so strait, that the coaches and horses are obliged to fetch a compass another way, as well on one hand as on the other.

The river Witham is arched over, so that you see nothing of it as you go through the main street ; but it makes a large lake on the west side, and has a canal, called the Foss-dike, by which it has a communication with the Trent, whereby the navigation of the Trent is made useful for trade to the city.

There are some very good buildings, and a great deal of very good company, in the upper city, and several families of gentlemen have houses there, besides those of the Prebendaries and other clergy belonging to the Cathedral.

### Northampton

From Daventry we crossed the country to Northampton, the handsomest and best-built town in all this part of England ; but here, as at Warwick, the beauty of it is owing to its own disasters ; for it was so effectually and suddenly burnt down, that very few houses were left standing ; and this, though the fire began in the daytime, the flame spread itself with such fury, and ran on with such terrible speed, that they tell us a townsman being upon Queen's-cross upon a hill, on the south side of the town, about two miles off, saw the fire at one end of the town then newly begun, and that before he could get to the town, it was burning at the remotest end, opposite to that where he first saw it. 'Tis now finely rebuilt with brick and stone, and the streets made spacious and wide. It has four churches, two hospitals, with a Charity School endowed for the instruction of poor children.

The great Church, the Town Hall, or Sessions House, the Jail, and all the public buildings, are the finest in any country town in England, being all new built.

The great Inn called the St. George, at the corner of the High Street, looks more like a palace than an inn, and cost above 2,000*l.* building ; and so generous was the owner, that, as we were told, when he had built it, he gave it to the poor of the town.

This is counted the centre of all the Horse-markets and Horse Fairs in England, there being here no less than four Fairs in a year : here they buy horses of all sorts, as well for the saddle as for the coach and cart, but chiefly for the two latter.

### Colchester in 1725

Colchester is an ancient Corporation ; the town large and very populous ; the streets fair and beautiful ; and though it may not be said to be finely built, yet there are abundance of good and well-built houses in it. It still mourns in the ruins of the late Civil War ; during which, or rather after the heat of that war was over, it suffered a severe siege ; which, the garrison making a resolute defence, was turned into a blockade, wherein the garrison and inhabitants also, suffered the utmost extremity of hunger, and were at last obliged to surrender at discretion ; when their two chief officers, Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle, were shot to death under the castle wall. The inhabitants had a tradition that no grass would grow upon the spot where the blood of those two gallant gentlemen was spilt ; and they showed the place bare of grass for many years, but whether for this reason I will not affirm ; the story is now dropped, and the grass, as I suppose, grows there as in other places

However, the battered walls, the breaches in the turrets, and the ruined churches still remain, except that the Church of St. Mary (where they had the Royal Fort) is rebuilt ; but the steeple, which was two thirds battered down, because the besieged had a large culver in upon it, which did much execution, remains still in that condition.

There is another church which bears the marks of those times, on the south side of the town, in the way of the Hithe ; of which more hereafter.

The lines of contravallation, with the forts built by

the besiegers, and which surrounded the whole town, remain very visible in many places. . . .

The river is navigable within three miles of the town for ships of large burthen ; a little lower it may receive even a Royal Navy. And up to that part called the Hithe, close to the houses, it is navigable for hoys and small barks. This Hithe is a long street, passing from West to East, on the south side of the town ; at the west-end of it there is a small intermission of the buildings, but not much ; and towards the river it is very populous (it may be called the Wapping of Colchester).

The town may be said chiefly to subsist by the trade of making Bays, which is known over most of the trading parts of Europe by the name of Colchester Bays, though indeed all the towns round carry on the same trade ; namely, Kelvedon, Witham, Coggeshall, Braintree, Bocking, etc., and the whole country, large as it is, may be said to be employed, and in part maintained, by the spinning of wool, for the Bay trade of Colchester and its adjacent towns.

## At Holyhead, 1726

*(Epigram on a Window)*

(JONATHAN SWIFT)

[Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, was a man of great abilities and vehement temper. Active at first as a supporter of the Whigs, he later lent his powerful aid to the Tories, and exercised considerable influence at times. But he is remembered chiefly for his writings, such as *The Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels*. Always inclined to be bitter and morose, Swift finally became insane.]

O NEPTUNE ! Neptune ! must I still  
Be here detain'd against my will ?

Is this your justice, when I'm come  
Above two hundred miles from home ?  
O'er mountains steep, o'er dusty plains,  
Half chok'd with dust, half drown'd with rains ;  
Only your godship to implore,  
To let me kiss your other shore ?  
A boon so small ! but I may weep,  
While you're, like Baal, fast asleep.

## Sir Roger in Westminster Abbey

(JOSEPH ADDISON)

[Joseph Addison was born in 1672, and educated at Oxford, where he gained repute as a scholar. A pension of £300 a year procured for him by Montague, Chancellor of the Exchequer, enabled him to travel on the Continent. He was deprived of his pension in 1703, but came into prominence by his poem, *The Campaign*, celebrating the victory of Blenheim. From this time he filled several public offices, becoming, in 1716, Secretary of State. But his chief title to fame is found in his delightful essays, contributed to the *Tatler* and *Spectator*. A number of the most charming deal with the character and doings of Sir Roger de Coverley, an old country gentleman. Addison died in 1719.]

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley told me the other night, that he had been reading my paper upon Westminster Abbey, in which, says he, there are a great many ingenious fancies. He told me at the same time, that he observed I had promised another paper upon the tombs, and that he should be glad to go and see them with me, not having visited them since he had read history. Accordingly I promised to call upon him the next morning, that we might go together to the Abbey.

I found the knight under his butler's hands, who always shaves him. He was no sooner dressed than

he called for a glass of the widow Truby's water, which he told me he always drank before he went abroad. He recommended to me a dram of it at the same time, with so much heartiness, that I could not forbear drinking it. As soon as I had got it down, I found it very unpalatable; upon which the knight, observing that I had made several wry faces, told me that he knew I should not like it at first, but that it was the best thing in the world against the stone or gravel. I could have wished, indeed, that he had acquainted me with the virtues of it sooner; but it was too late to complain, and I knew what he had done was out of goodwill.

His discourse was broken off by his man's telling him he had called a coach. Upon our going to it, after having cast his eye upon the wheels, he asked the coachman if his axle-tree was good; upon the fellow's telling him he would warrant it, the knight turned to me, told me he looked like an honest man, and went in without further ceremony.

We had not gone far, when Sir Roger, popping out his head, called the coachman down from his box, and upon presenting himself at the window, asked him if he smoked. As I was considering what this would end in, he bid him stop by the way at any good tobacconist's, and take in a roll of their best Virginia. Nothing material happened in the remaining part of our journey, till we were set down at the west end of the Abbey.

As we went up the body of the church, the knight pointed at the trophies upon one of the new monuments, and cried out, "A brave man, I warrant him!" Passing afterwards by Sir Cloudsley Shovel, he flung his hand that way, and cried, "Sir Cloudsley Shovel! a very gallant man!" As we stood before Busby's tomb, the knight uttered himself again after the same manner: "Dr. Busby! a great man! he whipped my grandfather; a very great man! I should have gone

to him myself, if I had not been a blockhead ; a very great man ! ”

We were then conducted to the two coronation chairs, where my old friend, after having heard that the stone underneath the most ancient of them, which was brought from Scotland, was called Jacob's pillow, sat himself down in the chair ; and looking like the figure of an old Gothic king, asked our interpreter what authority they had to say that Jacob had ever been in Scotland ? The fellow, instead of returning him an answer, told him that he hoped his honour would pay his forfeit. I could observe Sir Roger a little ruffled upon being thus trepanned ; but our guide not insisting upon his demand, the knight soon recovered his good humour, and whispered in my ear, that if Will Wimble were with us, and saw those two chairs, it would go hard but he would get a tobacco stopper out of one or t'other of them.

Our conductor then pointed to that monument where there is the figure of one of our English kings without an head , and upon giving us to know that the head, which was of beaten silver, had been stolen away several years since : “ Some Whig, I'll warrant you,” says Sir Roger ; “ you ought to lock up your kings better ; they will carry off the body too, if you don't take care.”

The glorious names of Henry the Fifth and Queen Elizabeth gave the knight great opportunities of shining. For my own part I could not but be pleased to see the knight show such an honest passion for the glory of his country, and such a respectful gratitude to the memory of its princes.

I must not omit, that the benevolence of my good old friend, which flows out towards every one he converses with, made him very kind to our interpreter, whom he looked upon as an extraordinary man ; for which reason he shook him by the hand at parting, telling him, that he should be very glad to see him at

his lodgings in Norfolk-buildings, and talk over these matters with him more at leisure.

## The Man of Ross

(ALEXANDER POPE)

[Pope was more given to satirizing his contemporaries than to praising them, but when he praised he praised nobly. His unrivalled wit is seen in his letters as well as his poetry, as the letter on Oxford shows. But though his letters lack spontaneity, being written with one eye on the public, he could be loyal to a friend. He refused the honorary degree Oxford offered to him, because one was not offered to his friend Warburton, who accompanied him. The following passage is from *Moral Essays*, Epistle iii —To Allen Lord Bathurst.]

BUT all our praises why should Lords engross ?  
 Rise, honest Muse ! and sing the Man of Ross .  
 Pleas'd Vaga echoes thro' her winding bounds,  
 And rapid Severn hoarse applause resounds  
 Who hung with woods yon mountain's sultry brow ?  
 From the dry rock who bade the waters flow ?  
 Not to the skies in useless columns tost,  
 Or in proud falls magnificently lost,  
 But clear and artless, pouring thro' the plain  
 Health to the sick, and solace to the swain  
 Whose Cause-way parts the vale with shady rows ?  
 Whose seats the weary Traveller repose ?  
 Who taught that heav'n-directed spire to rise ?  
 " The Man of Ross," each lisping babe replies.  
 Behold the Market-place with poor o'erspread !  
 The Man of Ross divides the weekly bread ,  
 He feeds yon Alms-house, neat, but void of state,  
 Where Age and Want sit smiling at the gate ;

*Man of Ross*, John Kyrle, who died in 1724, aged ninety, and lies buried in the chancel of the church at Ross in Herefordshire.

*Vaga*, The Latin name of the Wye.



Him portion'd maids, apprentic'd orphans blest,  
The young who labour, and the old who rest.  
Is any sick ? the Man of Ross relieves,  
Prescribes, attends, the med'cine makes, and gives.  
Is there a variance ; enter but his door,  
Balk'd are the Courts, and contest is no more.  
Despairing Quacks with curses fled the place,  
And vile Attorneys, now an useless race.

*B* Thrice happy man ! enabled to pursue  
What all so wish, but want the pow'r to do !  
Oh say, what sums that gen'rous hand supply ?  
What mines, to swell that boundless charity ?

*P.* Of Debts, and Taxes, Wife and Children dear,  
This man possess—five hundred pounds a year  
Blush, Grandeur, blush ! proud Courts, withdraw  
your blaze !  
Ye little Stars ! hide your diminish'd rays.

## Oxford

(ALEXANDER POPE)

NOTHING could have more of that melancholy which once used to please me, than my last day's journey, for after having pass'd through my favourite woods in the forest, with a thousand reveries of past pleasures, I rid over the hanging hills, whose tops were edged with groves, and whose feet water'd with winding rivers, listening to the falls of the cataracts below, and the murmuring of the winds above. The gloomy verdure of Stonor succeeded to these ; and then the shades of the evening overtook me. The moon rose in the clearest sky I ever saw, by whose solemn light I paced on slowly, without company, or any interruption to the range of my thoughts. About a mile before I reach'd Oxford, all the bells toll'd in different notes ; the clocks of every college answer'd one another, and sounded forth (some in a deeper, some a softer tone)

that it was eleven at night. All this was no ill preparation to the life I have led since, among those old walls, venerable galleries, stone porticos, studious walks and solitary scenes of the University. I wanted nothing but a black gown and a salary, to be as mere a book-worm as any there. I conform'd myself to the college hours, was roll'd up in books, lay in one of the most ancient, dusky parts of the University, and was as dead to the world as any hermit of the desert. If anything was alive or awake in me, it was a little vanity, such as even those good men us'd to entertain, when the monks of *their own order* extoll'd their piety and abstraction. For I found myself receiv'd with a sort of respect, which this idle part of mankind, the Learned, pay to their own species; who are as considerable here, as the busy, the gay, and the ambitious are in your world.

Indeed I was treated in such a manner, that I could not but sometimes ask myself in my mind, what college I was founder of, or what library I had built? Methinks, I do very ill to return to the world again, to leave the only place where I make a figure, and, from seeing myself seated with dignity on the most conspicuous shelves of a library, put myself into the abject posture of lying at a lady's feet in St. James's Square.

## London Streets

(JOHN GAY)

[Born near Barnstaple in 1688, apprenticed to a London silk mercer, Gay, in 1712, became secretary to the Duchess of Monmouth. The next year he published a poem on rural sports, and dedicated it to Pope, who was pleased with the honour. A lifelong friendship was then begun, and Gay's success as a writer and playwright assured. His best work is *The Beggar's Opera*. The following lines are from *Trivia*.]

THOUGH expedition bids, yet never stray  
Where no rang'd posts defend the rugged way.  
Here laden carts with thundering waggons meet,  
Wheels clash with wheels, and bar the narrow street ;  
The lashing whip resounds, the horses strain,  
And blood in anguish bursts the swelling vein.  
O barbarous men ! your cruel breasts assuage ;  
Why vent ye on the generous steed your rage ?  
Does not his service earn your daily bread ?  
Your wives, your children, by his labours fed ?  
If, as the Samian taught, the soul revives,  
And, shifting seats, in other bodies lives,  
Severe shall be the brutal coachman's change,  
Doom'd in a hackney horse the town to range ;  
Carmen, transform'd, the groaning load shall draw,  
Whom other tyrants with the lash shall awe.  
Who would of Watling Street the dangers share  
When the broad pavement of Cheapside is near ?  
Or who that rugged street would traverse o'er  
That stretches, O Fleet Ditch, from thy black shore  
To the Tower's moated walls ? Here steams ascend  
That, in mix'd fumes, the wrinkled nose offend ,  
Where chandlers' cauldrons boil ; where fishy prey  
Hide the wet stall, long absent from the sea ,  
And where the cleaver chops the heifer's spoil,  
And where huge hogsheads sweat with trainy oil. . . .

Where Covent Garden's famous temple stands  
That boasts the work of Jones' immortal hands ;  
Columns with plain magnificence appear,  
And graceful porches lead along the square  
Here oft my course I bend ; when lo ! from far  
I spy the furies of the foot-ball war ;  
The 'prentice quits his shop, to join the crew,  
Increasing crowds the flying game pursue.  
Thus, as you roll the ball o'er snowy ground,  
The gathering globe augments with every round.

*That rugged street, Thames Street.*

But whither shall I run ? the throng draws nigh,  
The ball now skims the street, now soars on high ;  
The dext'rous glazier strong returns the bound,  
And jingling sashes on the pent-house sound.

## Farewell to Bath

(LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU)

[Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762) was the daughter of the Duke of Kingston. She married Edward Wortley Montagu in 1712, and with him travelled much in Europe. She was a notable wit, and one of the most charming of letter-writers. From 1739 to 1761 she lived abroad, but returned to England the year before her death. A reference to her presence in Bath will be found in Thackeray's account of Mr Pitt in Bath.]

To all you ladies now at Bath,  
And eke, ye beaus, to you,  
With aching heart, and watery eyes,  
I bid my last adieu.

Farewell, ye nymphs, who waters sip  
Hot reeking from the pumps,  
While music lends her friendly aid,  
To cheer you from the dumps.

Farewell, ye wits, who prating stand,  
And criticize the fair,  
Yourselves the joke of men of sense,  
Who hate a coxcomb's air.

Farewell to Deard's, and all her toys,  
Which glitter in her shop,  
Deluding traps to girls and boys,  
The warehouse of the fop.

Lindsay's and Hayes's both farewell,  
 Where in the spacious hall,  
 With bounding steps, and sprightly air,  
 I've led up many a ball.

Where Somerville of courteous mien  
 Was partner in the dance,  
 With swimming Haws, and Brownlow blithe,  
 And Britton pink of France.

Poor Nash, farewell ! may fortune smile,  
 Thy drooping soul revive ;  
 My heart is full, I can no more—  
 John, bid the coachman drive.

## Leeds in 1757

(JOHN DYER)

[Dyer was born in 1700 His father was a solicitor of note at Aberglasney, in Carmarthenshire. Having a taste for painting, Dyer became a pupil of Richardson, an artist now better known by his books than his pictures. He published *Grongar Hill* in 1727, and *The Ruins of Rome* in 1740, about which time he was admitted to holy orders. *The Fleece*, which gives a picture of England's principal trade, appeared in 1757—that is, on the very eve of the Industrial Revolution The poem was much admired by Mark Akenside, but has been almost wholly neglected Dyer died in 1758 ]

. . . TAKE we now our eastward course  
 To the rich fields of Burstal. Wide around,  
 Hillock and valley, farm and village, smile :  
 And ruddy roofs, and chimney-tops appear,  
 Of busy Leeds, up-wafting to the clouds  
 The incense of thanksgiving : all is joy ;  
 And trade and business guide the living scene,  
 Roll the full cars, adown the winding Aire

Load the slow sailing barges, pile the pack  
On the long tinkling train of slow-pac'd steeds.  
As, when a sunny day invites abroad  
The sedulous ants, they issue from their cells  
In bands unnumber'd, eager for their work,  
O'er high, o'er low, they lift, they draw, they haste  
With warm affectiou to each other's aid ;  
Repeat their virtuous efforts, and succeed.  
Thus all is here in motion, all is life :  
The creaking wain brings copious store of corn :  
The grazier's sleeky kine obstruct the roads :  
The neat-dress'd housewives, for the festal board  
Crown'd with full baskets, in the field-way paths  
Come tripping on ; the echoing hills repeat  
The stroke of axe and hammer ; scaffolds rise,  
And growing edifices ; heaps of stone,  
Beneath the chisel, beauteous shapes assume  
Of frieze and column. Some, with even line,  
New streets are marking in the neighbouring fields,  
And sacred domes of worship. Industry,  
Which dignifies the artist, lifts the swain,  
And the straw cottage to a palace turns,  
Over the work presides. Such was the scene  
Of hurrying Carthage, when the Trojan chief  
First view'd her growing turrets. So appear  
Th' increasing walls of busy Manchester,  
Sheffield, and Birmingham, whose reddening fields  
Rise and enlarge their suburbs. Lo, in throngs,  
For every realm, the careful factors meet,  
Whispering each other. In long ranks the bales,  
Like war's bright files, beyond the sight extend  
Straight, ere the sounding bell the signal strikes,  
Which ends the hour of traffic, they conclude  
The speedy compact ; and, well-pleas'd, transfer,  
With mutual benefit, superior wealth  
To many a kingdom's rent, or tyrant's hoard.

## A Travelling Preacher

(JOHN WESLEY)

[For half a century John Wesley (1703-91) rode through the British Isles from town to town, preaching; and his absorbingly interesting *Journals* abound in illustrations of the rough and brutal spirit which so easily flared up in the townspeople of that time. It is possible, also, to trace the gradual improvement in the spirit of toleration, so that in the last of the extracts quoted below we see him actually receiving the freedom of the city of Perth. His letter about the jail at Bristol is especially interesting, as showing to what a degree the character of a prison depended on the keeper.]

## Wednesbury

*Thur.* 20 [Oct. 1743].—After preaching to a small attentive congregation I rode to Wednesbury. At twelve I preached in a ground near the middle of the town. . . . I was writing at Francis Ward's in the afternoon, when the cry arose that the mob had beset the house. We prayed that God would disperse them; and it was so; one went this way and another that; so that in half an hour, not a man was left. I told our brethren, "Now is the time for us to go," but they pressed me exceedingly to stay. So, that I might not offend them, I sat down, though I foresaw what would follow. Before five the mob surrounded the house again, in greater numbers than ever. The cry of one and all was, "Bring out the Minister; we will have the Minister." I desired one to take their captain by the hand and bring him into the house. After a few sentences interchanged between us, the lion was become a lamb. I desired him to go and bring one or two more of the most angry of his companions. He brought in two, who were ready to

swallow the ground with rage ; but in two minutes they were as calm as he. I then bade them make way, that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was in the midst of them, I called for a chair, and standing up, asked, " What do you want with me ? " Some said, " We want you to go with us to the Justice." I replied, " That I will with all my heart." I then spoke a few words, which God applied ; so that they cried out with might and main, " The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defence." I asked, " Shall we go to the Justice to-night or in the morning ? " Most of them cried, " To-night, to-night : " on which I went before, and two or three hundred followed ; the rest returning whence they came.

The night came on before we had walked a mile, together with heavy rain. However, on we went to Bentley-Hall, two miles from Wednesbury. One or two ran before to tell Mr. Lane, " They had brought Mr. Wesley before his Worship." Mr. Lane replied, " What have I to do with Mr. Wesley ? " By this time the main body came up, and began knocking at the door. A servant told them, " Mr. Lane was in bed." His son followed, and asked, " What is the matter ? " One replied, " Why, an't please you, they sing psalms all day ; nay, and make folks rise at five in the morning ; and what would your worship advise us to do ? " " To go home," said Mr. Lane, " and be quiet."

Here they were at a full stop, till one advised to go to Justice Persehouse at Walsal. All agreed to this. So we hastened on, and about seven came to his house ; but Mr. P—— likewise sent word, " That he was in bed." Now they were at a stand again ; but at last they all thought it the wisest course to make the best of their way home. About fifty of them undertook to convoy me ; but we had not gone a hundred yards when the mob of Walsal came pouring



in like a flood, and bore down all before them. The Darlaston mob made what defence they could ; but they were weary as well as out-numbered ; so that in a short time, many of them being knocked down, the rest ran away, and left me in their hands.

To attempt speaking was vain , for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea ; so they dragged me along till we came to the town, where seeing the door of a large house open, I attempted to go in , but a man, catching me by the hair, pulled me back into the middle of the mob . They made no more stop till they had carried me through the main street, from one end of the town to the other . I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness . At the west end of the town, seeing a door half open, I made toward it, and would have gone in ; but a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, saying, " They would pull the house down to the ground " . However, I stood at the door, and asked, " Are you willing to hear me speak ? " Many cried out, " No, no, knock his brains out , down with him , kill him at once." Others said, " Nay but we will hear him first " . I began asking, " What evil have I done ? Which of you have I wronged in word or deed ? " and continued speaking for above a quarter of an hour, till my voice suddenly failed ; then the floods began to lift up their voice again , many crying out, " Bring him away , bring him away."

In the meantime my strength and my voice returned, and I broke out aloud into prayer. And now the man who just before headed the mob, turned and said, " Sir, I will spend my life for you ; follow me, and not one soul here shall touch a hair of your head " . Two or three of his fellows confirmed his words, and got close to me immediately ; at the same time the gentleman in the shop cried out, " For shame, for shame ; let him go." An honest butcher, who was a little farther off, said, " It was a shame they should do

thus," and pulled back four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The people then, as it had been by common consent, fell back to the right and left; while those three or four men took me between them, and carried me through them all. But on the bridge the mob rallied again, we therefore went on one side, over the mill-dam, and thence through the meadows, till a little before ten God brought me safe to Wednesbury; having lost only one flap of my waistcoat, and a little skin from one of my hands.

### Rochdale and Bolton

*Wed., Oct. 18, 1749*—I rode, at the desire of John Bennett, to Rochdale, in Lancashire. As soon as ever we entered the town, we found the streets lined, on both sides, with multitudes of people, shouting, cursing, blaspheming, and gnashing upon us with their teeth. Perceiving it would not be practicable to preach abroad, I went into a large room, open to the street, and called aloud, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." The word of God prevailed over the fierceness of man. None opposed or interrupted; and there was a very remarkable change in the behaviour of the people, as we afterwards went through the town.

We came to Bolton about five in the evening. We had no sooner entered the main street, than we perceived the lions at Rochdale were lambs in comparison of those at Bolton. Such rage and bitterness I scarce ever saw before, in any creatures that bore the form of men. They followed us in full cry to the house where we went; and as soon as we were gone in, took possession of all the avenues to it, and filled the street from one end to the other. After some time the waves did not roar quite so loud. Mr. P—— then thought that we might venture out. They immediately closed in,

threw him down, and rolled him in the mire ; so that when he scrambled from them, and got into the house again, one could scarce tell what or who he was. When the first stone came among us through the window, I expected a shower to follow ; and the rather because they had now procured a bell to call their whole forces together. But they did not design to carry on the attack at a distance. Presently one ran up and told us that the mob had burst into the house. . . . Believing that the time was now come, I walked down into the thickest of them. They had now filled all the rooms below. I called for a chair. The winds were hushed, and all was calm and still. My heart was filled with love, my eyes with tears, and my mouth with arguments. They were amazed, they were ashamed, they were melted down, they devoured every word. What a turn was this !

### Liverpool

*Thur.* 14 [April 1755].—I rode by Manchester (where I preached about twelve) to Warrington. At six in the morning, Tuesday, I preached to a large and serious congregation ; and then went on to Liverpool, one of the neatest, best-built towns I have seen in England. I think it is full twice as large as Chester ; most of the streets are quite straight. Two-thirds of the town, we were informed, have been added within these forty years. If it continues to increase in the same proportion, in forty years more it will nearly equal Bristol. The people in general are the most mild and courteous I ever saw in a sea-port town.

### Huddersfield, Bristol, Wigan, and Perth

*Mon.* 9 [May 1757].—I rode over the mountains to Huddersfield. A wilder people I never saw in England ; the men, women, and children filled the street

as we rode along, and appeared ready to devour us. They were, however, tolerably quiet when I preached ; only a few pieces of dirt were thrown, and the bell-man came in the middle of the sermon, but was stopped by a gentleman of the town.

*January 2nd, 1761.*—I wrote the following letter :—

“ To the Editor of the *London Chronicle*.

“ SIR,—Of all the seats of woe on this side hell, few, I suppose, exceed or even equal Newgate. If any region of horror could exceed it a few years ago, Newgate in Bristol did ; so great was the filth, the stench, the misery and wickedness, which shocked all who had a spark of humanity left. How was I surprised then, when I was there a few weeks ago ! Every part of it, above stairs and below, even the pit wherein the felons are confined at night, is as clean and sweet as a gentleman’s house ; it being now a rule that every prisoner wash and clean his apartment thoroughly twice a week. Here is no fighting or brawling. . . . Here is no drunkenness suffered, however advantageous it might be to the keeper as well as the tapster. All possible care is taken to prevent idleness : those who are willing to work at their callings are provided with tools and materials, partly by the keeper, who gives them credit at a very moderate profit, partly by the alms occasionally given, which are divided with the utmost prudence and impartiality. Accordingly, at this time, among others, a shoe-maker, a tailor, a brazier, and a coach-maker, are working at their several trades. . . . By the blessing of God on these regulations, the prison now has a new face. Nothing offends either the eye or ear, and the whole has the appearance of a quiet, serious family. And does not the Keeper of Newgate deserve to be remembered as well as the man of Ross ? May the Lord remember him in that day ! Meantime, will no one

follow his example?—I am, Sir, your humble servant,  
JOHN WESLEY."

*Tues.* 28 [April 1772].—In the evening I preached once more at Perth, to a large and serious congregation. Afterwards they did me an honour I never thought of—presented me with the freedom of the city.

*Fri.* 9 [April 1790].—We went to Wigan, for many years proverbially called, *wicked Wigan*; but it is not now what it was. The inhabitants in general have taken a softer mould.

[At the time of this entry John Wesley was in his eighty-seventh year ]

## Southampton

(*Letter to Mr. Nicholls*)

(THOMAS GRAY)

[The learned author of the *Elegy* and *The Bard* was a sprightly writer of letters "Except comparison with the letters of Cowper," says Mr Herbert Paul, "there are few tests to which we could not fearlessly submit the letters of Gray"]

I RECEIVED your letter at Southampton; and as I would wish to treat everybody according to their own rule and measure of good breeding, have, against my inclination, waited till now before I answered it, purely out of fear and respect, and an ingenious diffidence of my own abilities. If you will not take this as an excuse, accept it at least as a well-turned period, which is always my principal concern.

So I proceed to tell you that my health is much improved by the sea, not that I drank it, or bathed in it, as the common people do: no! I only walked by it,

and looked upon it. The climate is remarkably mild, even in October and November ; no snow has been seen to lie there for these thirty years past , the myrtles grow in the ground against the houses, and Guernsey lilies bloom in every window ; the town, clean and well-built, surrounded by its old stone walls, with their towers and gateways, stands at the point of a peninsula, and opens full south to an arm of the sea, which, having formed two beautiful bays on each hand of it, stretches away in direct view, till it joins the British Channel ; it is skirted on either side with gently-rising grounds, clothed with thick wood, and directly cross its mouth rise the high lands of the Isle of Wight at distance, but distinctly seen. In the bosom of the woods (concealed from profane eyes) lie hid the ruins of Netley Abbey ; there may be richer and greater houses of religion, but the Abbot is content with his situation. See there, at the top of that hanging meadow, under the shade of those old trees that bend into a half circle about it, he is walking slowly (good man !) and bidding his beads for the souls of his benefactors, interred in that venerable pile that lies beneath him. Beyond it (the meadow still descending) nods a thicket of oaks that mask the building, and have excluded a view too garish and luxuriant for a holy eye ; only on either hand they leave an opening to the blue glittering sea. Did you not observe how, as that white sail shot by and was lost, he turned and crossed himself to drive the tempter from him that had thrown that distraction in his way ? I should tell you that the ferryman who rowed me, a lusty young fellow, told me that he would not for all the world pass a night at the Abbey, (there were such things near it,) though there was a power of money hid there. From thence I went to Salisbury, Wilton, and Stonehenge, but of these I say no more, they will be published at the University press.

*P.S.*—I must not close my letter without giving you

one principal event of my history ; which was, that (in the course of my late tour) I set out one morning before five o'clock, the moon shining through a dark and misty autumnal air, and got to the sea-coast time enough to be at the sun's levee. I saw the clouds and dark vapours open gradually to right and left, rolling over one another in great smoky wreaths, and the tide (as it flowed gently in upon the sands) first whitening, then slightly tinged with gold and blue ; and all at once a little line of insufferable brightness that (before I can write these five words) was grown to half an orb, and now to a whole one, too glorious to be distinctly seen. It is very odd it makes no figure on paper ; yet I shall remember it as long as the sun, or at least as long as I endure. I wonder whether anybody ever saw it before ? I hardly believe it.

## Newmarket and London

(HORACE WALPOLE)

[Horace Walpole, the " Prince of Letter-writers " (and also the Prince of Gossips), was in touch with every one in the society of his day, and acquainted with everything that was going on His letters are an important source of our knowledge of eighteenth-century society The following picture of Newmarket is taken from his letter to Sir Horace Mann, British Minister at Florence, dated " Newmarket, October 3, 1743 "]

I AM writing to you in an inn on the road to London. What a paradise should I have thought this when I was in the Italian inns ! in a wide barn with four ample windows, which had nothing more like glass than shutters and iron bars ! no tester to the bed, and the saddles and portmanteaus heaped on me to keep off the cold. What a paradise did I think the inn at Dover when I came back ! and what magnificence

were twopenny prints, salt-cellars, and boxes to hold the knives ; but the *summum bonum* was small-beer and the newspaper.

“ I bless'd my stars, and call'd it luxury ”

Who was the Neapolitan ambassadress that could not live at Paris, because there was no maccaroni ? Now I am relapsed into all the dissatisfied repinement of a true English grumbling voluptuary. . . . How dismal, how solitary, how scrub does this town look ; and yet it has actually a street of houses better than Parma or Modena. Nay, the houses of the people of fashion who come hither for the races, are palaces to what houses in London itself were fifteen years ago. People do begin to live again now, and I suppose in a term we shall revert to York Houses, Clarendon Houses, etc But from that grandeur all the nobility had contracted themselves to live in coops of a dining-room, a dark back room, with one eye in a corner, and a closet. Think what London would be, if the chief houses were in it, as in the cities in other countries, and not dispersed like great rarity-plums in a vast pudding of country. Well, it is a tolerable place as it is ! Were I a physician, I would prescribe nothing but recipe CCCLXV drachm. London Would you know why I like London so much ? Why, if the world must consist of so many fools as it does, I choose to take them in the gross, and not made into separate pills, as they are prepared in the country. Besides, there is no being alone but in a metropolis : the worst place in the world to find solitude is the country : questions grow there, and that unpleasant Christian commodity, neighbours. Oh ! They are all good Samaritans, and do so pour balms and nostrums upon one, if one has but the toothache, or a journey to take, that they break one's head. A journey to take—ay ! They talk over the miles to you, and tell you, you will be late in. My Lord Lovel says John always goes two hours in the



dark in the morning to avoid being one hour in the dark in the evening. I was pressed to set out to-day before seven : I did before nine : and here am I arrived at a quarter past five, for the rest of the night.

I am more convinced every day, that there is not only no knowledge of the world out of a great city, but no decency, no practicable society—I had almost said, not a virtue. . . .

## Dr. Johnson and Town Life

(JAMES BOSWELL)

[Perhaps these extracts might more fitly be headed "Samuel Johnson," for certainly Boswell would have failed to leave an immortal memory had he not met the stout-hearted old Doctor. Boswell became Dr Johnson's constant and admiring companion, and in his celebrated biography recorded the latter's conversation, doings, opinions, and habits with a fidelity and charm that has secured immortality for the book, its subject, and its author. Boswell himself (1740-95) was a Scottish advocate. His *Life of Johnson* appeared in 1791, and later editions contained also the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. On this journey to the Hebrides, undertaken in 1773, Johnson was accompanied by his devoted admirer. The passages which follow are from these works.]

### Life in London

TALKING of a London life, he said . " The happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it. I will venture to say, there is more learning and science within the circumference of ten miles from where we now sit, than in all the rest of the kingdom."

BOSWELL : " The only disadvantage is the great distance at which people live from one another "

JOHNSON : " Yes, Sir ; but that is occasioned by

the largeness of it, which is the cause of all the other advantages."

BOSWELL : " Sometimes I have been in the humour of wishing to retire to a desert."

JOHNSON : " Sir, you have desert enough in Scotland."

I was amused by considering with how much ease and coolness he could write or talk to a friend, exhorting him not to suppose that happiness was not to be found as well in other places as in London ; when he himself was at all times sensible of its being, comparatively speaking, a heaven upon earth. The truth is, that by those who from sagacity, attention, and experience, have learnt the full advantage of London, its pre-eminence over every other place, not only for variety of enjoyment, but for comfort, will be felt with a philosophical exultation. The freedom from remark and petty censure with which life may be passed there, is a circumstance which a man who knows the teasing restraint of a narrow circle must relish highly. Mr. Burke, whose orderly and amiable domestic habits might make the eye of observation less irksome to him than to most men, said once very pleasantly in my hearing, " Though I have the honour to represent Bristol, I should not like to live there , I should be obliged to be so much *upon my good behaviour*." In London, a man may live in splendid society at one time, and in frugal retirement at another, without animadversion. There, and there alone, a man's own house is truly his *castle*, in which he can be in perfect safety from intrusion whenever he pleases. I never shall forget how well this was expressed to me one day by Mr. Meynell : " The chief advantage of London," said he, " is, that a man is always *so near his burrow*."

I talked of the cheerfulness of Fleet Street, owing to

the constant quick succession of people which we perceive passing through it.

JOHNSON : " Why, Sir, Fleet Street has a very animated appearance : but I think the tide of human existence is at Charing Cross."

### Dr. Johnson visits Oxford

He had now a great desire to go to Oxford, as his first jaunt after his illness. We talked of it for some days, and I had promised to accompany him. He was impatient and fretful to-night, because I did not at once agree to go with him on Thursday. When I considered how ill he had been, and what allowance should be made for the influence of sickness upon his temper, I resolved to indulge him, though with some inconvenience to myself, as I wished to attend the musical meeting in honour of Handel, in Westminster Abbey, on the following Saturday.

In the midst of his own diseases and pains, he was ever compassionate to the distresses of others, and actively earnest in procuring them aid, as appears from a note to Sir Joshua Reynolds, of June, in these words — " I am ashamed to ask for some relief for a poor man, to whom, I hope, I have given what I can be expected to spare. The man importunes me, and the blow goes round. I am going to try another air on Thursday."

On Thursday, June 3, the Oxford post-coach took us up in the morning at Bolt Court. The other two passengers were Mrs. Beresford and her daughter, two very agreeable ladies from America ; they were going to Worcestershire, where they then resided. Frank had been sent by his master the day before to take places for us ; and I found from the way-bill that Dr. Johnson had made our names be put down. Mrs. Beresford, who had read it, whispered me, " Is this the

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great Dr. Johnson ? ” I told her it was ; so she was then prepared to listen. As she soon happened to mention in a voice so low that Johnson did not hear it, that her husband had been a member of the American Congress, I cautioned her to beware of introducing that subject, as she must know how very violent Johnson was against the people of that country. He talked a great deal. But I am sorry I have preserved little of the conversation. Miss Beresford was so much charmed, that she said to me aside, “ How he does talk ! Every sentence is an essay.” She amused herself in the coach with knotting ; he would scarcely allow this species of employment any merit. “ Next to mere idleness,” said he, “ I think knotting is to be reckoned in the scale of insignificance ; though I once attempted to learn knotting Dempster’s sister,” looking to me, “ endeavoured to teach me it ; but I made no progress.”

I was surprised at his talking without reserve in the public post-coach of the state of his affairs. “ I have,” said he, “ about the world, I think, above a thousand pounds, which I intend shall afford Frank an annuity of seventy pounds a year.” Indeed his openness with people at a first interview was remarkable. He said once to Mr. Langton, “ I think I am like Squire Richard in ‘ The Journey to London,’ *I’m never strange in a strange place* ” He was truly *social*. He strongly censured what is much too common in England among persons of condition,—maintaining an absolute silence when unknown to each other ; as, for instance, when occasionally brought together in a room before the master or mistress of the house has appeared. “ Sir, that is being so uncivilized as not to understand the common rights of humanity.”

At the inn where we stopped he was exceedingly dissatisfied with some roast mutton which he had for dinner. The ladies, I saw, wondered to see the great philosopher, whose wisdom and wit they had been

admiring all the way, get into ill-humour from such a cause. He scolded the waiter, saying, "It is as bad as bad can be; it is ill-fed, ill-killed, ill-kept, and ill-drest."

He bore the journey very well, and seemed to feel himself elevated as he approached Oxford, that magnificent and venerable seat of Learning, Orthodoxy, and Toryism. Frank came in the heavy coach, in readiness to attend him, and we were received with the most polite hospitality at the house of his old friend Dr. Adams, Master of Pembroke College, who had given us a kind invitation. Before we were set down, I communicated to Johnson my having engaged to return to London directly, for the reason I have mentioned, but that I would hasten back to him again. He was pleased that I had made this journey merely to keep him company. He was easy and placid with Dr. Adams, Mrs. and Miss Adams, and Mrs. Kenicott, widow of the Hebræan, who was here on a visit. He soon despatched the inquiries which were made about his illness and recovery, by a short and distinct narrative; and then assuming a gay air, repeated from Swift,—

"Nor think on our approaching ills,  
And talk of spectacles and pills"

### Dr. Johnson ventures to Edinburgh

I am, I flatter myself, completely a citizen of the world. In my travels through Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Corsica, France, I never felt myself from home; and I sincerely love "every kindred and tongue and people and nation." I subscribe to what my late truly learned and philosophical friend Mr. Crosbie said, that the English are better animals than the Scots; they are nearer the sun; their blood is richer, and more mellow: but when I humour any of

them in an outrageous contempt of Scotland, I fairly own I treat them as children. And thus I have, at some moments, found myself obliged to treat even Dr. Johnson.

To Scotland however he ventured ; and he returned from it in great good humour, with his prejudices much lessened, and with very grateful feelings of the hospitality with which he was treated ; as is evident from that admirable work, his *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, which, to my utter astonishment, has been misapprehended, even to rancour, by many of my countrymen.

To have the company of Chambers and Scott, he delayed his journey so long, that the Court of Session, which rises on the eleventh of August, was broke up before he got to Edinburgh.

On Saturday, the fourteenth of August, 1773, late in the evening, I received a note from him, that he was arrived at Boyd's inn, at the head of the Canongate. I went to him directly. He embraced me cordially ; and I exulted in the thought, that I now had him actually in Caledonia. Mr. Scott's amiable manners, and attachment to our *Socrates*, at once united me to him. He told me that, before I came in, the Doctor had unluckily had a bad specimen of Scottish cleanliness. He then drank no fermented liquor. He asked to have his lemonade made sweeter ; upon which the waiter, with his greasy fingers, lifted a lump of sugar, and put into it. The Doctor, in indignation, threw it out of the window. Scott said he was afraid he would have knocked the waiter down. Mr. Johnson told me, that such another trick was played him at the house of a lady in Paris. He was to do me the honour to lodge under my roof. I regretted sincerely that I had not also a room for Mr. Scott. Mr. Johnson and I walked arm-in-arm up the High Street to my house in James's Court : it was a dusky night : I could not prevent his being assailed by the evening effluvia

of Edinburgh. I heard a late baronet, of some distinction in the political world in the beginning of the present reign, observe, that "walking the streets of Edinburgh at night was pretty perilous, and a good deal odoriferous." The peril is much abated by the care which the magistrates have taken to enforce the city laws against throwing foul water from the windows ; but, from the structure of the houses in the old town, which consist of many stories, in each of which a different family lives, and there being no covered sewers, the odour still continues. A zealous Scotsman would have wished Mr. Johnson to be without one of his five senses upon this occasion. As we marched slowly along, he grumbled in my ear, " I smell you in the dark ! " But he acknowledged that the breadth of the street, and the loftiness of the buildings on each side, made a noble appearance.

### Dr. Johnson comes to London to die

As Johnson had now very faint hopes of recovery, and as Mrs. Thrale was no longer devoted to him, it might have been supposed that he would naturally have chosen to remain in the comfortable house of his beloved wife's daughter, and end his life where he began it. But there was in him an animated and lofty spirit ; and however complicated diseases might depress ordinary mortals, all who saw him beheld and acknowledged the *invictum animum Catonis*. Such was his intellectual ardour even at this time, that he said to one friend, " Sir, I look upon every day to be lost, in which I do not make a new acquaintance ; " and to another, when talking of his illness, " I will be conquered ; I will not capitulate. "

And such was his love of London, so high a relish had he of its magnificent extent, and variety of intellectual entertainment, that he languished when absent

from it, his mind having become quite luxurious from the long habit of enjoying the metropolis ; and therefore, although at Lichfield, surrounded with friends who loved and revered him, and for whom he had a very sincere affection, he still found that such conversation as London affords, could be found nowhere else. These feelings joined, probably, to some flattering hopes of aid from the eminent physicians and surgeons in London, who kindly and generously attended him without accepting fees, made him resolve to return to the capital.

## Aldborough

(GEORGE CRABBE)

[Crabbe (1754-1832)—the poets' poet, for most poets like his works—here describes his native town. On the Quay—Slaughden Quay—he used as a boy to pile up tubs of butter The following lines are taken from *The Borough*—which is Aldborough. In *Tales of the Hall* can be read an account of his own boyhood there ]

“ DESCRIBE the Borough ”—though our idle tribe  
May love description, can we so describe,  
That you shall fairly streets and buildings trace,  
And all that gives distinction to a place ?  
This cannot be ; yet, moved by your request,  
A part I paint—let Fancy form the rest.

Cities and towns, the various haunts of men,  
Require the pencil, they defy the pen.  
Could he, who sang so well the Grecian fleet,  
So well have sung of alley, lane, or street ?  
Can measured lines these various buildings show,  
The Town-Hall Turning, or the Prospect Row ?  
Can I the seats of wealth and want explore,  
And lengthen out my lays from door to door ?

Then let thy Fancy aid me—I repair  
From this tall mansion of our last-year's Mayor



Till we the outskirts of the Borough reach,  
 And these half-buried buildings next the beach ;  
 Where hang at open doors the net and cork,  
 While squalid sea-dames mend the meshy work ;  
 Till comes the hour, when fishing through the tide  
 The weary husband throws his freight aside,  
 A living mass, which now demands the wife,  
 Th' alternate labours of their humble life. . . .

Yon is our Quay ! those smaller hoys from town  
 Its various ware, for country-use, bring down ,  
 Those laden wagons, in return, impart  
 The country-produce to the city mart ;  
 Hark ! to the clamour in that miry road,  
 Bounded and narrow'd by yon vessel's load ,  
 The lumbering wealth she empties round the place,  
 Package, and parcel, hogshead, chest and case .  
 While the loud seaman and the angry hind,  
 Mingling in business, bellow to the wind.

Near these a crew amphibious, in the docks,  
 Rear, for the sea, those castles on the stocks  
 See ! the long keel, which soon the waves must hide ;  
 See ! the strong ribs which form the roomy side ,  
 Bolts yielding slowly to the sturdiest stroke,  
 And planks which curve and crackle in the smoke.  
 Around the whole rise cloudy wreaths, and far  
 Bear the warm pungence of o'er-boiling tar

Dabbling on shore half-naked sea-boys crowd,  
 Swim round a ship, or swing upon the shroud ,  
 Or in a boat purloin'd, with paddles play,  
 And grow familiar with the watery way  
 Young though they be, they feel whose sons they are,  
 They know what British seamen do and dare ,  
 Proud of that fame, they raise and they enjoy  
 The rustic wonder of the village-boy.

Before you bid these busy scenes adieu,  
 Behold the wealth that lies in public view,  
 Those far-extended heaps of coal and coke,

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Where fresh-fill'd lime-kilns breathe their stifling  
smoke.

This shall pass off, and you behold, instead,  
The night-fire gleaming on its chalky bed ;  
When from the Light-house brighter beams will rise  
To show the shipman where the shallow lies. . .

Of manufactures, trade, inventions rare,  
Steam-towers and looms, you'd know our Borough's  
share—

'Tis small : we boast not these rich subjects here,  
Who hazard thrice ten thousand pounds a year ;  
We've no huge buildings, where incessant noise  
Is made by springs and spindles, girls and boys ;  
Where, 'mid such thundering sounds, the maiden's  
song  
Is " Harmony in Uproar " all day long.

### The Mayors

(WILLIAM BLAKE)

[William Blake, born in London in 1758, was the first  
of the eighteenth-century poets to break away from the  
formalism that marked the poetry of that age, and to  
recover the quality of lyrical ecstasy. Never a popular  
writer, he died in 1827 ]

THIS city and this country has brought forth many  
mayors,  
To sit in state and give forth laws out of their old oak  
chairs,  
With face as brown as any nut with drinking of strong  
ale—  
Good English hospitality, O then it did not fail !

*Harmony in Uproar*, The title of a short piece of humour by  
Arbuthnot.

With scarlet gowns and broad gold lace, would make a  
yeoman sweat ;  
With stockings roll'd above their knees and shoes as  
black as jet ,  
With eating beef and drinking beer, O they were stout  
and hale—  
Good English hospitality, O then it did not fail !

Thus sitting at the table wide the mayor and aldermen  
Were fit to give law to the city ; each ate as much as  
ten :  
The hungry poor enter'd the hall to eat good beef and  
ale—  
Good English hospitality, O then it did not fail !

## An Outspoken Critic

(WILLIAM COBBETT)

[William Cobbett (1763–1833) had a remarkable career—ploughman, soldier, farmer, author, member of Parliament, twice prosecuted for sedition : such a man might be expected to write with vigour and with scant regard for the feelings of his opponents. His *Rural Rides* gives a unique picture of rural life between 1820 and 1830 ; but it deals also, in the most outspoken way, with many English towns. We may dissent from his views (few, for instance, who know the “borough beautiful,” will agree with his picture of Cheltenham) but the force and vivacity of his writings will well repay the reader.]

### On Cheltenham

*Cheltenham* is a nasty, ill-looking place, half clown and half cockney. The town is one street about a mile long, but then, at some distance from this street, there are rows of white tenements, with green balconies, like those inhabited by the tax-eaters round London. Indeed, this place appears to be the resi-

dence of an assemblage of tax-eaters. These vermin shift about between London, Cheltenham, Bath, Bognor, Brighton, Tunbridge, Ramsgate, Margate, Worthing, and other spots in England, while some of them get over to France and Italy : just like those body-vermin of different sorts that are found in different parts of the tormented carcass at different hours of the day and night, and in different degrees of heat and cold.

Cheltenham is at the foot of a part of that chain of hills which form the sides of that *dish* which I described as resembling the vale of Gloucester. Soon after quitting this resort of the lame and the lazy, the gormandizing and guzzling, the bilious and the nervous, we proceeded on, between stone walls, over a country little better than that from Cirencester to Burlip Hill—a very poor, dull, and uninteresting country all the way to Oxford.

### On Lewes

Lewes is in a valley of the *South Downs* : this town is at eight miles' distance, to the south-south-west or thereabouts. There is a great extent of rich meadows above and below Lewes. The town itself is a model of solidity and neatness. The buildings all substantial to the very outskirts ; the pavements good and complete ; the shops nice and clean ; the people well dressed ; and, though last not least, the girls remarkably pretty, as, indeed, they are in most parts of Sussex ; round faces, features small, little hands and wrists, plump arms, and bright eyes. The Sussex men, too, are remarkable for their good looks. A Mr Baxter, a stationer at Lewes, showed me a *farmer's account book* which is a very complete thing of the kind. The Inns are good at Lewes, the people civil and not servile, and the charges really (considering the taxes) far below what one could reasonably expect.

## On Huntingdon

The country changes but little till you get quite to Huntingdon. The land is generally quite open, or in large fields. Strong wheat-land, that wants a good deal of draining. Very few turnips of any sort are raised; and, of course, few sheep and cattle kept. Few trees, and those scrubbed. Few woods, and those small. Few hills, and those hardly worthy of the name. All which, when we see them, make us cease to wonder, that this country is so famous for *fox-hunting*. Such it has doubtless been in all times, and to this circumstance Huntingdon, that is to say, Huntingdon, or Huntingdown, unquestionably owes its name; because *down* does not mean *unploughed* land, but open and *unsheltered* land, and the Saxon word is *un*.—When you come down near to the town itself, the scene suddenly, totally, and most agreeably changes. The *River Ouse* separates Godmanchester from Huntingdon, and there is, I think, no very great difference in the population of the two. Both together do not make up a population of more than about five thousand souls. Huntingdon is a slightly built town, compared with Lewes for instance. The houses are not in general so high, nor made of such solid and costly materials. The shops are not so large and their contents not so costly. There is not a show of so much business and so much opulence. But Huntingdon is a very clean and nice place, contains many elegant houses, and the environs are beautiful. Above and below the bridge, under which the Ouse passes, are the most beautiful, and by far the most beautiful, meadows that I ever saw in my life. The meadows at Lewes, at Guildford, at Farnham, at Winchester, at Salisbury, at Exeter, at Gloucester, at Hereford, and even at Canterbury, are nothing, compared with those of Huntingdon in point of beauty.

Here are no reeds, here is no sedge, no unevenness of any sort. Here are *bowling greens* of hundreds of acres in extent, with a river winding through them, full to the brink. *One* of these meadows is the *race-course*; and so pretty a spot, so level, so smooth, so green, and of such an extent I never saw, and never expected to see. From the bridge you look across the valleys, first to the West, and then to the East; the valleys terminate at the foot of rising ground, well set with trees, from amongst which church spires raise their heads here and there. I think it would be very difficult to find a more delightful spot than this in the world. To my fancy (and every one to his taste) the prospect from this bridge far surpasses that from Richmond Hill.—All that I have yet seen of Huntingdon I like exceedingly. It is one of those pretty, clean, unstenched, unconfined places that tend to lengthen life and make it happy.

### On Winchester

We went to King's Worthy; that is about two miles on the road from Winchester to London; and then, turning short to our left, came up upon the downs to the north of Winchester race-course. Here, looking back at the city and at the fine valley above and below it, and at the many smaller valleys that run down from the high ridges into that great and fertile valley, I could not help admiring the taste of the ancient kings who made this city (which once covered all the hill round about, and which contained 92 churches and chapels) a chief place of their residence. There are not many finer spots in England; and if I were to take in a circle of eight or ten miles of semi-diameter, I should say that I believe there is not one so fine. Here are hill, dell, water, meadows, woods, cornfields, downs: and all of them very fine and very beautifully disposed.

## On Sheffield

From Leeds I proceeded on to this place, not being able to stop at either Wakefield or Barnsley, except merely to change horses. The people in those towns were apprised of the time that I should pass through them ; and, at each place, great numbers assembled to see me, to shake me by the hand, and to request me to stop. I was so hoarse as not to be able to make the post-boy hear me when I called to him ; and, therefore, it would have been useless to stop ; yet I promised to go back if my time and my voice would allow me. They do not , and I have written to the gentlemen of those places to inform them, that when I go to Scotland in the spring, I will not fail to stop in those towns, in order to express my gratitude to them. All the way along, from Leeds to Sheffield, it is coal and iron, and iron and coal. It was dark before we reached Sheffield ; so that we saw the iron furnaces in all the horrible splendour of their everlasting blaze. Nothing can be conceived more grand or more terrific than the yellow waves of fire that incessantly issue from the top of these furnaces, some of which are close by the wayside. Nature has placed the beds of iron and the beds of coal alongside of each other, and art has taught man to make one to operate upon the other, as to turn the iron-stone into liquid matter, which is drained off from the bottom of the furnace, and afterwards moulded into blocks and bars, and all sorts of things. The combustibles are put into the top of the furnace, which stands thirty, forty, or fifty feet up in the air, and the ever blazing mouth of which is kept supplied with coal and coke and iron-stone, from little iron wagons forced up by steam, and brought down again to be re-filled. It is a surprising thing to behold ; and it is impossible to behold it without being convinced that, whatever other

nations may do with cotton and with wood, they will never equal England with regard to things made of iron and steel. This Sheffield, and the land all about it, is one bed of iron and coal. They call it black Sheffield, and black enough it is ; but from this one town and its environs go nine-tenths of the knives that are used in the whole world ; there being, I understand, no knives made at Birmingham ; the manufacture of which place consists of the larger sorts of implements, of locks of all sorts, and guns and swords, and of all the endless articles of hardware which go to the furnishing of a house. As to the land, viewed in the way of agriculture, it really does appear to be very little worth. I have not seen, except at Harewood and Ripley, a stack of wheat since I came into Yorkshire ; and even there, the whole I saw ; and all that I have seen since I came into Yorkshire , and all that I saw during a ride of six miles that I took into Derbyshire the day before yesterday ; all put together would not make the one-half of what I have many times seen in one single rick-yard of the vales of Wiltshire. But this is all very proper : these coal-diggers, and iron-melters, and knife-makers, compel us to send the food to them, which, indeed, we do very cheerfully, in exchange for the produce of their rocks, and the wondrous works of their hands.

The ragged hills all about this town are bespangled with groups of houses inhabited by the working cutlers. They have not suffered like the working weavers ; for, to make knives, there must be the hand of man. Therefore, machinery cannot come to destroy the wages of the labourer.

### On Ipswich

From Eye to Ipswich, we pass through a series of villages, and at Ipswich, to my great surprise, we found a most beautiful town, with a population of



about twelve thousand persons ; and here our profound Prime Minister might have seen most abundant evidence of prosperity ; for the *new houses* are, indeed, very numerous. . . .

Even at this hour, with all the unnatural swellings of the war, there are not two thousand people, *including the bed-ridden and the babies*, to each of the magnificent churches. Of adults, there cannot be more than about 1,400 to a church , and there is one of the churches which, being well filled, as in ancient times, would contain from four to seven thousand persons, for the nave of it appears to me to be larger than St. Andrews Hall at Norwich, which Hall was formerly the church of the Benedictine Priory. And, perhaps, the great church here might have belonged to some monastery ; for here were three Augustine priories, one of them founded in the reign of William the Conqueror, another founded in the reign of Henry the Second, another in the reign of King John, with an Augustine friary, a Carmelite friary, an hospital founded in the reign of King John ; and here, too, was the college founded by Cardinal Wolsey, the gateway of which, though built in brick, is still preserved, being the same sort of architecture as that of Hampton Court, and St. James's Palace.

I know of no town to be compared with Ipswich, except it be Nottingham ; and there is this difference in the two ; that Nottingham stands high, and, on one side, looks over a very fine country , whereas Ipswich is in a dell, meadows running up above it, and a beautiful arm of the sea below it The town itself is substantially built, well paved, everything good and solid, and no wretched dwellings to be seen on its outskirts. From the town itself, you can see nothing ; but you can, in no direction, go from it a quarter of a mile without finding views that a painter might crave.

## On Bury St. Edmunds

To conclude an account of Suffolk, and not to sing the praises of Bury St. Edmunds, would offend every creature of Suffolk birth ; even at Ipswich, when I was praising *that place*, the very people of that town asked me if I did not think Bury St. Edmunds the nicest town in the world. Meet them wherever you will, they have all the same boast ; and indeed, as a town *in itself*, it is the neatest place that ever was seen. It is airy, it has several fine open places in it, and it has the remains of the famous abbey walls and the abbey gate entire , and it is so clean and so neat that nothing can equal it in that respect. It was a favourite spot in ancient times ; greatly endowed with monasteries and hospitals. Besides the famous Benedictine abbey, there were once a college and a friary, and as to the abbey itself, it was one of the greatest in the kingdom ; and was so ancient as to have been founded only about forty years after the landing of Saint Austin in Kent. The land all round about it is good ; and the soil is of that nature as not to produce much dirt at any time of the year ; but the country about it is *flat*, and not of that beautiful variety we find at Ipswich.

## On Boston

This morning I went out at six, looked at the town, walked three miles on the road to Spilsby, and back to breakfast at nine. Boston (*bos* is Latin for *ox*) though not above a fourth or fifth part of the size of its *daughter* in New England, which got its name, I dare say, from some persecuted native of this place, who had quitted England and all her wealth and all her glories, to preserve that *freedom*, which was still more dear to him ; though not a town like New

Boston, and though little to what it formerly was, when agricultural produce was the great staple of the kingdom and the great subject of foreign exchange, is, nevertheless, a very fine town; good houses, good shops, pretty gardens about it, a fine open place, nearly equal to that of Nottingham, in the middle of it a river and a canal passing through it, each crossed by a handsome and substantial bridge, a fine market for sheep, cattle, and pigs, and another for meat, butter, and fish; and being, like Lynn, a great place for the export of corn and flour, and having many fine mills, it is altogether a town of very considerable importance; and, which is not to be overlooked, inhabited by people none of whom appear to be in misery.

The great pride and glory of the Bostonians, is *their church*, which is, I think, 400 feet long, 90 feet wide, and has a tower (or steeple as they call it) 300 feet high, which is both a landmark and a sea-mark. To describe the richness, the magnificence, the symmetry, the exquisite beauty of this pile, is wholly out of my power. It is impossible to look at it without feeling, first, admiration and reverence and gratitude to the memory of our fathers who reared it; and next, indignation at those who affect to believe, and contempt for those who do believe, that, when this pile was reared, the age was *dark*, the people rude and ignorant, and the country *destitute of wealth* and *thinly peopled*. Look at this church then; look at the heaps of white rubbish that the parsons have lately stuck up under the "*New-church Act*," and which, after having been built with money forced from the nation by odious taxes, they have stuffed full of *locked-up pens*, called *pews*, which they let for money, as cattle- and sheep- and pig-pens are let at fairs and markets; nay, after having looked at this work of the "*dark ages*," look at that great, heavy, ugly unmeaning mass of stone called ST. PAUL'S, which an American friend

of mine, who came to London from Falmouth and had seen the cathedrals at Exeter and Salisbury, swore to me, that when he first saw it, he was at a loss to guess whether it were a *courthouse* or a *jail* ; after looking at Boston Church, go and look at that great gloomy lump, and then say which is the age really meriting the epithet *dark*.

### On Hull

I have seen the vale of Honiton in Devonshire, that of Taunton and of Glastonbury, in Somersetshire : I have seen the vales of Gloucester and Worcester, and the banks of the Severn and the Avon : I have seen the vale of Berkshire, that of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire ; I have seen the beautiful vales of Wiltshire , and the banks of the Medway, from Tunbridge to Maidstone, called the Garden of Eden : I was born at one end of Arthur Young's " finest ten miles in England " : I have ridden my horse across the Thames at its two sources ; and I have been along every inch of its banks, from its sources to Gravesend, whence I have sailed out of it into the Channel ; and having seen and had ability to judge of the goodness of the land in all these places, I declare that I have never seen any to be compared with the land on the banks of the Humber, from the Holderness country included, and with the exception of the land from Wisbeach to Holbeach, and Holbeach to Boston. Really, the single parish of Holbeach, or a patch of the same size in the Holderness country, seems to be equal in value to the whole of the county of Surrey, if we leave out the little plot of hop-garden at Farnham.

Nor is the town of Hull itself to be overlooked. It is a little city of London : streets, shops, everything like it ; clean as the best parts of London, and the people as bustling and attentive. The town of

Hull is *surrounded* with commodious docks for shipping. These docks are separated, in three or four places, by drawbridges ; so that, as you walk round the town, you walk by the side of the docks and the ships. The town on the outside of the docks is pretty considerable, and the walks from it into the country beautiful. I went about a good deal, and I nowhere saw marks of beggary or filth, even in the outskirts : none of those nasty, shabby, thief-looking sheds that you see in the approaches to London · none of those off-scourings of pernicious and insolent luxury. I hate commercial towns in general there is generally something so loathsome in the look, and so stern and unfeeling in the manners of sea-faring people, that I have always, from my very youth, disliked seaports ; but really the sight of this nice town, the manners of its people, the civil, and kind and cordial reception that I met with, and the clean streets, and especially the pretty gardens in every direction, as you walk into the country, has made Hull, though a seaport, a place that I shall always look back to with delight.

## Wordsworth goes up to Cambridge

(WILLIAM WORDSWORTH)

[William Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth in 1770 In 1798 he joined with Coleridge in issuing the notable *Lyrical Ballads*. *The Prelude*, from which the following passage is taken, was not published until after his death in 1850 ]

It was a dreary morning when the wheels  
Rolled over a wide plain o'erhung with clouds,  
And nothing cheered our way till first we saw  
The long-roofed chapel of King's College lift  
Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,  
Extended high above a dusky grove.

Advancing, we espied upon the road  
A student clothed in gown and tasselled cap,  
Striding along as if o'ertasked by Time,  
Or covetous of exercise and air ;  
He passed—nor was I master of my eyes  
Till he was left an arrow's flight behind.  
As near and nearer to the spot we drew,  
It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's force.  
Onward we drove beneath the Castle , caught,  
While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a glimpse of Cam ;  
And at the *Hoop* alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were full of hope ;  
Some friends I had, acquaintances who there  
Seemed friends, poor simple schoolboys, now hung  
    round  
With honour and importance : in a world  
Of welcome faces up and down I roved ;  
Questions, directions, warnings and advice,  
Flowed in upon me, from all sides ; fresh day  
Of pride and pleasure ! to myself I seemed  
A man of business and expense, and went  
From shop to shop about my own affairs,  
To Tutor or to Tailor, as befell,  
From street to street with loose and careless mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream ; I roamed  
Delighted through the motley spectacle ,  
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students, streets,  
Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gateways, towers ;  
Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,  
A northern villager. . . .

The Evangelist St. John my patron was :  
Three Gothic courts are his, and in the first  
Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure ;  
Right underneath, the College kitchens made  
A humming sound, less tuneable than bees,  
But hardly less industrious ; with shrill notes

Of sharp command and scolding intermixed.  
Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,  
Who never let the quarters, night or day,  
Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the hours  
Twice over with a male and female voice.  
Her pealing organ was my neighbour too ;  
And from my pillow, looking forth by light  
Of moon or favouring stars, I could behold  
The antechapel where the statue stood  
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,  
The marble index of a mind for ever  
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought, alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer's room  
All studded round, as thick as chairs could stand,  
With loyal students, faithful to their books,  
Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,  
And honest dunces—of important days,  
Examinations, when the man was weighed  
As in a balance ! of excessive hopes,  
Tremblings withal and commendable fears,  
Small jealousies, and triumphs good or bad—  
Let others that know more speak as they know.  
Such glory was but little sought by me,  
And little won. . . .

And yet

This was a gladsome time. Could I behold—  
Who, less insensible than sodden clay  
In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide,  
Could have beheld,—with undelighted heart,  
So many happy youths, so wide and fair  
A congregation in its budding-time  
Of health, and hope, and beauty, all at once  
So many divers samples from the growth  
Of life's sweet season—could have seen unmoved  
That miscellaneous garland of wild flowers  
Decking the matron temples of a place  
So famous through the world ? To me, at least,

It was a goodly prospect : . . .

if a throng was near

That way I leaned by nature ; for my heart  
Was social, and loved idleness and joy . . .

## Companionships,

Friendships, acquaintances, were welcome all.  
We sauntered, played, or rioted ; we talked  
Unprofitable talk at morning hours ;  
Drifted about along the streets and walks,  
Read lazily in trivial books, went forth  
To gallop through the country in blind zeal  
Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast  
Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the stars  
Come forth, perhaps, without one quiet thought.

Such was the tenour of the second act  
In this new life. Imagination slept,  
And yet not utterly. I could not print  
Ground where the grass had yielded to the steps  
Of generations of illustrious men,  
Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass  
Through the same gateways, sleep where they had slept,  
Wake where they waked, range that inclosure old,  
That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.  
Place also by the side of this dark sense  
Of noble feeling, that those spiritual men,  
Even the great Newton's own ethereal self,  
Seemed humbled in these precincts thence to be  
The more endeared. Their several memories here  
(Even like their persons in their portraits clothed  
With the accustomed garb of daily life)  
Put on a lowly and a touching grace  
Of more distinct humanity, that left  
All genuine admiration unimpaired.

Beside the pleasant Mill of Trompington  
I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn shade ;  
Heard him, while birds were warbling, tell his tales



Of amorous passion. And that gentle Bard,  
 Chosen by the Muses for their Page of State—  
 Sweet Spenser, moving through his clouded heaven  
 With the moon's beauty and the moon's soft pace,  
 I called him Brother, Englishman, and Friend !  
 Yea, our blind Poet, who, in his later day,  
 Stood almost single ; uttering odious truth—  
 Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,  
 Soul awful—if the earth has ever lodged  
 An awful soul—I seemed to see him here  
 Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress  
 Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth—  
 A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks  
 Angelical, keen eye, courageous look,  
 And conscious step of purity and pride.

Composed upon Westminster Bridge,  
 Sept. 3, 1802

*(Written on the roof of a coach, on my way to France)*

(WILLIAM WORDSWORTH)

EARTH has not anything to show more fair ;  
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
 A sight so touching in its majesty  
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear

The beauty of the morning : silent, bare,  
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie  
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky,—  
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep  
 In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ;  
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !

The river glideth at his own sweet will :  
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

## A Fair City

(SIR WALTER SCOTT)

[Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), the greatest of our historical novelists, possessed a remarkable power of creating anew the life of citizens in an age long past. The novel from which these extracts are taken, *The Fair Maid of Perth*, abounds in scenes and characters which effectually make the dry bones of history stir into life.]

## A Street-Fray in Perth

HAVING attired himself in his best, the honest armourer next placed nearest to his heart (which throbbed at its touch), a little gift which he had long provided for Catherine Glover, and which his quality of Valentine would presently give him the title to present, and her to receive, without regard to maidenly scruples. He wrapped himself in his cloak, and hastened through the still silent streets, determined to appear at the window appointed a little before dawn.

With this purpose he passed up the High Street, and turned down the opening where St. John's Church now stands, in order to proceed to Curfew Street, when it occurred to him, from the appearance of the sky, that he was at least an hour too early for his purpose, and that it would be better not to appear at the place of rendezvous till nearer the time assigned. Other gallants were not unlikely to be on the watch as well as himself, about the house of the Fair Maid of Perth ; and he knew his own foible so well, as to be sensible of the great chance of a scuffle arising between them.

While these thoughts were passing through his

brain, the armourer loitered in his pace, often turning his eyes eastward. He was now passing slowly under the wall of Saint Anne's Chapel (not failing to cross himself and say an *ave*, as he trod the consecrated ground), when a voice which seemed to come from behind one of the flying buttresses of the chapel, said, "He lingers that has need to run."

"Who speaks?" said the armourer, looking around him, somewhat startled at an address so unexpected, both in its tone and tenor.

"No matter who speaks," answered the same voice, "Do thou make great speed, or thou wilt scarce make good speed. Bandy not words, but begone"

"Saint or sinner, devil or angel," said Henry, crossing himself, "your advice touches me but too dearly to be neglected. Saint Valentine be my speed"

So saying he instantly changed his loitering pace to one with which few people could have kept up, and in an instant was in Couvrefew Street. He had not made three steps towards Simon Glover's, which stood in the midst of the narrow street, when two men started from under the houses on different sides, and advanced as it were by concert, to intercept his passage. The imperfect light only permitted him to discern that they wore the Highland mantle.

"Clear the way, catheran," said the armourer in the deep stern voice which corresponded with the breadth of his chest.

They did not answer, at least intelligibly, but he could see that they drew their swords, with the purpose of withstanding him by violence. Conjecturing some evil, but of what kind he could not anticipate, Henry instantly determined to make his way through whatever odds, and defend his mistress, or at least die at her feet. He cast his cloak over his left arm as a buckler, and advanced rapidly and steadily to the two men. The nearest made a thrust at him; but Henry Smith, parrying the blow with his cloak, dashed

his arm in the man's face, and tripping him at the same time, gave him a severe fall on the causeway ; while almost at the same instant he struck a blow with his whinger at the fellow who was upon his right hand, so severely applied, that he also lay prostrate by his associate. Meanwhile, the armourer pushed forward in alarm, for which the circumstances of the street being guarded or defended by strangers, who conducted themselves with such violence, afforded sufficient reason. He heard a suppressed whisper and a bustle under the Glover's windows—those very windows from which he had expected to be hailed by Catherine as her Valentine. He kept to the opposite side of the street, that he might reconnoitre their number and purpose. But one of the party who were beneath the window, observing or hearing him, crossed the street also, and taking him doubtless for one of the sentinels, asked, in a whisper, "What noise was yonder, Kenneth ? Why gave you not the signal ?"

"Villain," said Henry, "you are discovered, and you shall die the death !"

As he spoke thus, he dealt the stranger a blow with his weapon, which would probably have made his words good, had not the man, raising his arm, received on his hand the blow meant for his head. The wound must have been a severe one, for he staggered and fell with a deep groan. Without noticing him farther, Henry Smith sprung forward upon a party of men who seemed engaged in placing a ladder against the lattice-window in the gable. Henry did not stop either to count their numbers, or to ascertain their purpose. But crying the alarm-word of the town, and giving the signal at which the burghers were wont to collect, he rushed on the night-walkers, one of whom was in the act of ascending the ladder. The Smith seized it by the rounds, threw it down on the pavement, and placing his foot on the body of the man who had been mounting, prevented him from regaining his feet.

His accomplices struck fiercely at Henry, to extricate their companion. But his mail coat stood him in good stead, and he repaid their blows with interest, shouting aloud, " Help, help, for bonnie St. Johnston ! Bows and blades, brave citizens ! bows and blades !— they break into our houses under cloud of night."

These words, which resounded far through the streets, were accompanied by as many fierce blows, dealt with good effect among those whom the armourer assailed. In the meantime, the inhabitants of the district began to awaken, and appear on the street in their shirts, with swords and targets, and some of them with torches. The assailants now endeavoured to make their escape, which all of them effected except the man who had been thrown down along with the ladder. Him the intrepid armourer had caught by the throat in the scuffle, and held as fast as the greyhound holds the hare. The other wounded men were borne off by their comrades.

## Bristol

(JAMES MONTGOMERY)

[James Montgomery (1771-1854), the son of a Moravian minister, was born in Scotland, and endured many trials while struggling to obtain a living by his pen. He became editor of a Sheffield newspaper, and in 1796 was imprisoned for criticizing a magistrate. He wrote a number of long poems and many hymns, some of which are of enduring merit. Montgomery, though not a genius, was a devout, sincere man. The following passage is from *A Good Man's Monument*, a poem written in memory of Richard Reynolds, a Bristol Quaker.]

BRISTOL ! to thee the eye of Albion turns ;  
At thought of thee thy country's spirit burns ;  
For in thy walls, as on her dearest ground,  
Are " British minds and British manners " found :

And, midst the wealth which Avon's waters pour  
 From every clime on thy commercial shore,  
 Thou hast a native mine of worth untold ;  
 Thine heart is *not* encased 'n rigid gold,  
 Wither'd to mummy, steel'd against distress ;  
 No—free as Severn's waves, that spring to bless  
 Their parent hills, but as they roll expand  
 In argent beauty through a lovelier land,  
 And widening, brightening to the western sun,  
 In floods of glory through thy channel run ,  
 Thence, mingling with the boundless tide are hurl'd  
 In Ocean's chariot round the utmost world  
 Thus flow thine heart-streams, warm and unconfined,  
 At home, abroad, to woe of every kind.

## At Lyme Regis

(JANE AUSTEN)

[Jane Austen, born at Steventon, in Hampshire, in 1775, resided at Bath from 1801 until 1805, and afterwards lived at Southampton, Chawton, and finally at Winchester, where she died in 1817. She had already published four notable novels, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Mansfield Park*, and *Emma*. Shortly after her death two others were published, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*. It is from the last-named that the following extract is taken.]

THE young people were all wild to see Lyme. Though November, the weather was by no means bad ; and, in short, Louisa, who was the most eager of the eager, having formed the resolution to go, bore down all the wishes of her father and mother for putting it off till summer ; and to Lyme they were to go—Charles, Mary, Anne, Henrietta, Louisa, and Captain Wentworth.

The first heedless scheme had been to go in the

morning and return at night ; but to this Mr. Musgrove, for the sake of his horses, would not consent ; and when it came to be rationally considered, a day in the middle of November would not leave much time for seeing a new place, after deducting seven hours, as the nature of the country required, for going and returning. They were, consequently, to stay the night there, and not to be expected back till the next day's dinner. This was felt to be a considerable amendment ; and though they all met at the Great House at rather an early breakfast hour, and set off very punctually, it was so much past noon before the two carriages were descending the long hill into Lyme, and entering upon the still steeper street of the town itself, that it was very evident they would not have more than time for looking about them, before the light and warmth of the day were gone.

After securing accommodations, and ordering a dinner at one of the inns, the next thing to be done was unquestionably to walk directly down to the sea. They were come too late in the year for any amusement or variety which Lyme, as a public place, might offer. The rooms were shut up, the lodgers almost all gone, scarcely any family but of the residents left ; and as there is nothing to admire in the buildings themselves, the remarkable situation of the town, the principal street almost hurrying into the water, the walk to the Cobb, skirting round the pleasant little bay, which, in the season, is animated with bathing machines and company ; the Cobb itself, its old wonders and new improvements, with the very beautiful line of cliffs, stretching out to the east of the town, are what the stranger's eye will seek ; and a very strange stranger it must be who does not see charms in the immediate environs of Lyme, to make him wish to know it better. The scenes in its neighbourhood, Charmouth, with its high grounds, and extensive sweeps of country, and still more, its sweet, retired

bay, backed by dark cliffs, where fragments of low rock among the sands make it the happiest spot for watching the flow of the tide, for sitting in unwearied contemplation ; the woody varieties of the cheerful village of Up Lyme ; and, above all, Pinny, with its green chasms between romantic rocks, where the scattered forest trees and orchards of luxuriant growth, declare that many a generation must have passed away since the first partial falling of the cliff prepared the ground for such a state, where a scene so wonderful and so lovely is exhibited, as may more than equal any of the resembling scenes of the far-famed Isle of Wight : these places must be visited, and visited again to make the worth of Lyme understood.

There was too much wind to make the high part of the new Cobb pleasant for the ladies, and they agreed to get down the steps to the lower, and all were contented to pass quietly and carefully down the steep flight, excepting Louisa ; she must be jumped down them by Captain Wentworth. In all their walks he had had to jump her from the stiles ; the sensation was delightful to her. The hardness of the pavement for her feet made him less willing upon the present occasion ; he did it, however. She was safely down, and instantly, to show her enjoyment, ran up the steps to be jumped down again. He advised her against it, thought the jar too great ; but, no, he reasoned and talked in vain, she smiled and said, " I am determined I will ; " he put out his hands ; she was too precipitate by half a second, she fell on the pavement of the Lower Cobb, and was taken up lifeless ! There was no wound, no blood, no visible bruise ; but her eyes were closed, she breathed not, her face was like death. The horror of that moment to all who stood around !



## In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers

(CHARLES LAMB)

[Charles Lamb (1775-1834), the most charming of English essayists, was educated at Christ's Hospital, and became a clerk in the service of the East India Company. His life was shadowed by the intermittent insanity of his beloved sister, Mary, and to care for her he remained unmarried. His essays, which he signed "Elia," appeared in the *London Magazine*, and have won for themselves an abiding place in literature. Lamb, like many other of our great writers, loved London, and several of his essays deal in the most charming, whimsical, and kindly way with the city scenes among which he passed his life. The extracts that follow are from some of the best known of his essays; unfortunately space forbids their being printed in full.]

I LIKE to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek—such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep-peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sunrise?

I have a kindly yearning towards these dim specks—poor blots—innocent weaknesses—

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth—these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's-self, enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni*—to pursue him in

imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades ! to shudder with the idea that " now, surely, he must be lost for ever ! " —to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered day-light—and then (O fulness of delight !) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel ! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew It was an awful spectacle, certainly ; not much unlike the old stage direction in *Macbeth*, where the " Apparition of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand, rises "

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early ramble, it is good to give him a penny,—it is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts ; the jeers and taunts of the populace ; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or spashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularly of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness.—In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough—yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened—when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous

weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth—but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pie-man—there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever—with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth—for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it—that I could have been content, if the honour of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since,—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur)—encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius—was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noon-day, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber ; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited ; so creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

## On Theatre-going

(CHARLES LAMB)

[From *Old China* His cousin Bridget is speaking ]

You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to

sit, when we saw the battle of Hexham, and the Surrender of Calais, and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the Children in the Wood—when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say that the Gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then—and I appeal to you whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in, indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough—but there was still a law of civility to woman recognized to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat and the play, afterwards! Now we can only pay our money and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then—but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.

## Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty Years Ago

(CHARLES LAMB)

I WAS a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough ; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead ! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years ! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces ! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire !

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the livelong day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing-excursions to the New River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can—for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes :—How merrily we would sally forth into the fields ; and strip under the first warmth of the sun ; and wanton like young dace in the streams ; getting us appetites

for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying—while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings—the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them!—How faint and languid, finally, we would return, towards night-fall, to our desired morsel, half rejoicing, half reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless—shivering at cold windows of print shops, to extract a little amusement, or haply, as a last resort, in the hopes of a little novelty, to pay a fifty times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower—to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier than *in* them. The Upper and the Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master; but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just as we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush

across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod ; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great goodwill—holding it “like a dancer ” It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority ; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often staid away whole days from us ; and when he came, it made no difference to us—he had his private room to retire to, the short time he staid, to be out of the sound of our noise.

How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with Sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, “how neat and fresh the twigs looked.” While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite, we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us ; his storms came near, but never touched us ; contrary to Gideon’s miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry. His boys turned out the better scholars ; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude ; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of

indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus B. had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate* wig. No comet expounded surer.—J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?"—Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, sirrah" (his favourite adjuration), "I have a great mind to whip you,"—then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair—and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell—"and I WILL too."—In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor* was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in those realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.



## The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple

(CHARLES LAMB)

I WAS born, and passed the first seven years of my life, in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountains, its river, I had almost said—for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places?—these are of my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot:—

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,  
The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,  
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,  
There whylome wont the Templar knights to bide,  
Till they decayed through pride

Indeed, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet Street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden; that goodly pile

Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,

confronting with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically-shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown Office-row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades! a man would give something

to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times ! to the astoundment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic ! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light ! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never caught, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep !

Ah ! yet doth beauty like a dial hand  
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived !

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure and silent heart-language of the old dial ! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost everywhere vanished ? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sunset, of temperance, and good hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd "carved it out quaintly in the sun" ; and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottoes more touching than tombstones. It was a

pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell, who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers.

## London Town

(LORD BYRON)

[Lord Byron was born in 1788 A man of wayward temperament, his life was marked by some follies, much unhappiness, and a glorious end He died in 1824 while helping the Greeks in their struggle against Turkey The following stanza is taken from *Don Juan*, Canto X]

A MIGHTY mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,  
Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye  
Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping  
In sight, then lost amidst the forestry  
Of masts, a wilderness of steeples peeping  
On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy ;  
A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown  
On a fool's head—and there is London Town !

## The Mermaid Tavern

(JOHN KEATS)

[John Keats, the son of a London stable-keeper, was born in 1795 He was apprenticed to a surgeon, but soon resolved to devote himself to literature Between 1816 and 1819 he produced much work of remarkable promise and merit, but his health was failing, and he died in February 1821 Short as was his life, Keats is universally regarded as one of the greatest of English poets]

The Mermaid Tavern was a celebrated London inn where, in Elizabethan and Stuart days, poets and dramatists gathered ]

SOULS of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,

## THE TOWN IN LITERATURE

Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern ?  
Have ye tippled drink more fine  
Than mine host's Canary wine ?  
Or are fruits of Paradise  
Sweeter than those dainty pies  
Of venison ? O generous food !  
Drest as though bold Robin Hood  
Would, with his Maid Marian,  
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day  
Mine host's sign-board flew away  
Nobody knew whither, till  
An astrologer's old quill  
To a sheepskin gave the story,  
Said he saw you in your glory,  
Underneath a new-old sign  
Sipping beverage divine  
And pledging with contented smack  
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern ?

## A Letter from Winchester

(JOHN KEATS)

*Monday, Sept. 20, 1819.*

To George and Georgiana Keats.

THIS day is a grand day for Winchester. They elect the Mayor. It was indeed high time the place should have some sort of excitement. There was nothing going on—all asleep. Not an old maid's sedan re-

turning from a card party ; and if any old women have got tipsy at christenings, they have not exposed themselves in the street. The first night, though, of our arrival here there was a slight uproar took place at about ten of the clock. We heard distinctly a noise patting down the street, as of a walking-cane of the good old dowager breed ; and a little minute after we heard a less voice observe, " What a noise the ferril made,—it must be loose." Brown wanted to call the constables, but I observed it was only a little breeze, and would soon pass over. The side streets here are excessively maiden-lady-like ; the door-steps always fresh from the flannel. The knockers have a very staid, serious, nay almost awful quietness about them. I never saw so quiet a collection of lions' and rams' heads. The doors most part black, with a little brass handle just above the keyhole, so that you may easily shut yourself out of your own house. He ! He ! There is none of your Lady Bellaston ringing and rapping here, no thundering Jupiter-footmen, no opera-treble tattoos, but a modest lifting up of the knocker by a set of little wee old fingers that peep through the grey mittens, and a dying fall thereof. The great beauty of poetry is that it makes everything in every place interesting. The palatine Venice and the abbotine Winchester are equally interesting. Some time since I began a poem called *The Eve of St. Mark*, quite in the spirit of town quietude. I think I will give you the sensation of walking about an old country town in a coolish evening. I know not whether I shall ever finish it ; I will give it as far as I have gone. *Ut tibi placeat*—

### The Eve of St. Mark

Upon a Sabbath day it fell ;  
Twice holy was the Sabbath bell,

That call'd the folk to evening prayer ;  
The city streets were clean and fair  
From wholesome drench of April rains ;  
And, when on western window-panes,  
The chilly sunset faintly told  
Of unmatured green valleys cold,  
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,  
Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,  
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,  
And daisies on the aguish hills  
Twice holy was the Sabbath bell ;  
The silent streets were crowded well  
With staid and pious companies,  
Warm from their fire-side orat'ries ;  
And moving, with demurest air,  
To evensong, and vesper prayer,  
Each arched porch, and entry low,  
Was fill'd with patient folk and slow,  
With whispers hush, and shuffling feet,  
While play'd the organ loud and sweet.

The bells had ceas'd, the prayers begun,  
And Bertha had not yet half done  
A curious volume, patch'd and torn,  
That all day long, from earliest morn,  
Had taken captive her two eyes,  
Among its golden broideries  
Bertha was a maiden fair,  
Dwelling in the old minster-square ;  
From her fire-side she could see,  
Sidelong, its rich antiquity,  
Far as the Bishop's garden-wall,  
Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,  
Full-leav'd, the forest had outstript,  
By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,  
So shelter'd by the mighty pile.  
Bertha arose, and read awhile,  
With forehead 'gainst the window-pane.  
Again she tried, and then again,  
Until the dusk eve left her dark  
Upon the legend of St Mark.  
From plaited lawn-frill, fine and thin,  
She lifted up her soft warm chin,

With aching neck and swimming eyes,  
And dazed with saintly imageries.

All was gloom, and silent all,  
Save now and then the still footfall  
Of one returning homewards late,  
Past the echoing minster-gate  
The clamorous daws, that all the day  
Above tree-tops and towers play,  
Pair by pair had gone to rest,  
Each in ancient belfry-nest,  
Where asleep they fall betimes,  
To music and the drowsy chimes .

## St. Edmundsbury in the Twelfth Century

(THOMAS CARLYLE)

[Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) was the son of a Scottish stone-mason. His education, begun at home and in the parish school of Ecclefechan, was continued at Edinburgh University. At an early age he began to write, and as the years went by this strange, great man, though never a “popular” author, exercised a most profound influence on the thought of his age. Though primarily concerned with men and the forces which sway men’s destinies, Carlyle had the power of recognizing the distinctive features of any spot, and a striking gift for making dead scenes live. The first extract given below is from his brilliant work, *Past and Present*, and the second from *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*.]

OUR Abbot being dead, the *Dominus Rex*, Henry II., or Ranulf de Glanvill *Justiciarius* of England for him, set Inspectors or Custodians over us,—not in any breathless haste to appoint a new Abbot, our revenues coming into his own *Scaccarium*, or royal Exchequer, in the meanwhile. They proceeded with some rigour, these Custodians: took written inventories, clapt on seals, exacted everywhere strict tale and measure:

but wherefore should a living monk complain ? The living monk has to do his devotional drill-exercise ; consume his allotted *pitantia*, what we call *pittance*, or ration of victual ; and possess his soul in patience

Dim, as through a long vista of Seven Centuries, dim and very strange looks that monk-life to us ; the ever-surprising circumstance this, That it is a *fact* and no dream, that we see it there, and gaze into the very eyes of it ! Smoke rises daily from those culinary chimney-throats ; there are living human beings there, who chant, loud-braying, their matins, nones, vespers ; awakening *echoes*, not to the bodily ear alone. St Edmund's Shrine, perpetually illuminated, glows ruddy through the Night, and through the Night of Centuries withal ; St. Edmundsbury Town paying yearly Forty pounds for that express end Bells clang out : on great occasions, all the bells. We have Processions, Preachings, Festivals, Christmas Plays, *Mysteries* shown in the Churchyard, at which latter the Townsfolk sometimes quarrel Time was, Time is, as Friar Bacon's Brass Head remarked ; and withal Time will be. There are three Tenses, *Tempora*, or Times , and there is one Eternity , and as for us,

“ We are such stuff as Dreams are made of ! ”

Indisputable, though very dim to modern vision, rests on its hilly slope that same *Bury*, *Stow*, or Town of St. Edmund ; already a considerable place, not without traffic, nay manufactures, would Jocelin only tell us what. Jocelin is totally careless of telling , but, through dim fitful apertures, we can see *Fullones*, “ Fullers,” see cloth making ; looms dimly going, dye-vats, and old women spinning yarn. We have Fairs, too, *Nundinae*, in due course ; and the Londoners give us much trouble, pretending that they, as a metropolitan people, are exempt from tolls Besides there is Field-husbandry, with perplexed settlement



of Convent rents : corn-ricks pile themselves within burgh, in their season ; and cattle depart and enter ; and even the poor weaver has his cow,—“ dungheaps ” lying quiet at most doors (*ante foras*, says the incidental Jocelin), for the Town has yet no improved police. Watch and ward we nevertheless do keep and have Gates,—as what Town must not ; thieves so abounding ; war, *werra*, such a frequent thing ! Our thieves, at the Abbot’s judgment-bar, deny ; claim wager of battle , fight, are beaten, and *then* hanged. “ Ketel, the thief,” took this course , and it did nothing for him,—merely brought us, and indeed himself, new trouble !

Everyway a most foreign Time What difficulty, for example, has our *Cellerarius* to collect the *rep-selver*, “ reaping silver,” or penny, which each householder is by law bound to pay for cutting down the Convent grain ! Richer people pretend that it is commuted, that it is this and the other , that, in short, they will not pay it. Our *Cellerarius* gives up calling on the rich. In the houses of the poor, our *Cellerarius* finding, in like manner, neither penny nor good promise, snatches, without ceremony, what *vadium* (pledge, *wad*) he can come at , a joint-stool, kettle, nay the very house-door, “ *hostrium* ” , and old women, thus exposed to the unfeeling gaze of the public, rush out after him with their distaffs and the angriest shrieks ; “ *vetulae exebant cum colis suis*,” says Jocelin, “ *minantes et exprobanτες* ”

What a historical picture, glowing visible, as St. Edmund’s Shrine by night, after Seven long Centuries or so ! *Vetulae cum colis* . My venerable ancient spinning grandmothers,—ah, and ye too have to shriek, and rush out with your distaffs ; and become Female Chartists, and scold all evening with void doorway ;—and in old Saxon, as we in modern, would fain demand some Five-point Charter, could it be fallen-in with, the Earth being too tyrannous !—Wise Lord

Abbots, hearing of such phenomena, did in time abolish or commute the reap-penny, and one nuisance was abated. But the image of these justly-offended old women, in their old wool costumes, with their angry features, and spindles brandished, lives forever in the historical memory. Thanks to thee, Jocelin Boswell Jerusalem was taken by the Crusaders, and again lost by them ; and Richard Cœur-de-Lion " veiled his face " as he passed in sight of it . but how many other things went on, the while !

## The Birthplace of Cromwell

(THOMAS CARLYLE)

HUNTINGDON itself lies pleasantly along the left bank of the Ouse ; sloping pleasantly upwards from Ouse Bridge, which connects it with the old village of Godmanchester ; the Town itself consisting mainly of one fair street, which towards the north end of it opens into a kind of irregular market-place, and then contracting again soon terminates The two churches of All-Saints and St. John's, as you walk up northward from the Bridge, appear successively on your left , the churchyard flanked with shops or other houses The Ouse, which is of very circular course in this quarter, " winding as if reluctant to enter the Fen-country," says one Topographer, has still a respectable drab-colour, gathered from the clays of Bedfordshire ; has not yet the Stygian black which in a few miles farther it assumes for good. Huntingdon, as it were, looks over into the Fens ; Godmanchester, just across the river, already stands on black bog The country to the east is all Fen (mostly unreclaimed in Oliver's time, and still of a very dropsical character) ; to the West it is hard green ground, agreeably broken into little heights, duly fringed with wood, and bearing marks

of comfortable long-continued cultivation. Here on the edge of the firm green land, and looking over into the black marshes with their alder-trees and willow-trees, did Oliver Cromwell pass his young years. Drunken Barnabee, who travelled, and drank, and made Latin rhymes, in that country about 1635, through whose glistening satyr-eyes one can still discern this and the other feature of the Past, represents to us on the height behind Godmanchester, as you approach the scene from Cambridge and the south, a big Oak-tree—which has now disappeared, leaving no notable successor. If Oliver Cromwell climbed that Oak-tree, in quest of bird-nests or boy-adventures, the Tree, or this poor ghost of it, may still have a kind of claim to memory.

## Mrs. Carlyle at Ramsgate

(JANE WELSH CARLYLE)

[Jane Welsh Carlyle (1801–66), wife of Thomas Carlyle, was a woman of extraordinary ability, a person of shrewd insight, and of great vivacity as a letter-writer. Her letters were prepared for publication by her husband, and appeared after his death under the title of *Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle*. It is from this collection that the following lively account of Ramsgate is taken.]

WELLINGTON CRESCENT, RAMSGATE,  
*Tuesday, August 6, 1861*

VERY charming doesn't that look, with the sea in front as far as eye can reach? And that seen (the East Cliff) you needn't wish to ever see more of Ramsgate. It is made up of narrow, steep, confused streets like the worst parts of Brighton. The shops look nasty, the people nasty, the smells are nasty! (spoiled

*Doesn't that look* Written on Ramsgate note-paper, with a print of the harbour, etc.

shrimps complicated with cesspool !). Only the East Cliff is clean, and genteel, and airy ; and would be perfect as sea-quarters if it weren't for the noise ! which is so extraordinary as to be almost laughable.

Along that still-looking road or street between the houses and gardens are passing and re-passing, from early morning to late night, cries of prawns, shrimps, lollipops,—things one never wanted, and will never want, of the most miscellaneous sort ; and if that were all ! But a brass band plays all through our breakfast, and repeats the performance often during the day, and the brass band is succeeded by a band of Ethiopians, and that again by a band of female fiddlers ! and interspersed with these are individual barrel-organs, individual Scotch bagpipes, individual French horns ! Oh, it is “ most expensive ! ” And the night noises were not to be estimated by the first night ! These are so many and frequent as to form a sort of mass of voice ; perhaps easier to get some sleep through than an individual nuisance of cock or dog. There are hundreds of cocks ! and they get waked up at, say, one in the morning by some outburst of drunken song or of cat-wailing ! and never go to sleep again (those cocks) but for minutes ! and there are three steeple clocks that strike in succession , and there are doors and gates that slam, and dogs that bark occasionally, and a saw-mill, and a mews, etc — in short, everything you could wish not to hear ! And I hear it all and am getting to sleep in hearing it ! the bed is so soft and clean, and the room so airy , and then I think under every shock, so triumphantly —“ Crow away,” “ roar away.” “ bark away,” “ slam away ; you can't disturb Mr. C. at Cheyne Row, that can't you ! ” and the thought is so soothing, I go off asleep—till next thing ! I might try Geraldine's room ; but she has now got an adjoining baby ! Yesterday we drove to Broadstairs—a quieter place, but we saw no lodgings that were likely to be quiet,

except one villa at six guineas a week, already occupied.

*Wednesday, August 7, 1861*

I had just cleared my toilet table, and carried my writing-things from the sitting-room to my bedroom window, where there was no worse noise for the moment than carpet beating and the grinding of passing carts, whereas the sitting-room had become perfectly maddening with bagpipes under the windows and piano-practice under the floor (a piano hired in by "the first floor" yesterday)! All which received an irritating finishing touch from the rapid, continuous scrape, scraping of Geraldine's pen (nothing more irritating, as you know, than to see "others" perfectly indifferent to what is driving oneself wild) Had just dipped the pen in the ink when—a "yellow scoundrel," the loudest, harshest of yellow scoundrels, struck up under my bedroom window! And here the master power of Babbage has not reached! Indeed, noise seems to be the grand joy of life at Ramsgate. If I had come to Ramsgate with the least idea of writing letters, or doing anything whatever with my head, I might go back at once. But I came to swallow down as much sea air as possible, and that end is attained without fatigue; for lying on the sofa with our three windows wide open, on the sea, we are as well aired as if we were sailing on it, and the bedroom is full of sea air all night too. It is certainly doing me good, though I can't ever get slept many minutes together for the noises. I get up hungry for breakfast, and am hungry again for dinner—and a fowl does not serve Geraldine and me two days!! I do hope you are getting decently fed. It won't be for want of assiduous will on Margaret's part if things are not as you like them.

## English Towns in the Seventeenth Century

(LORD MACAULAY)

[Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59) was the most popular historian of his age. His *History of England* was written with the express aim of combining historical accuracy with a picturesqueness and vivacity which should "produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies" He was himself a lover of towns and town life, and it must have been a congenial task to recreate, as he did in the extracts that follow, the English towns of the seventeenth century ]

### Bristol

GREAT as has been the change in the rural life of England since the Revolution, the change which has come to pass in the cities is still more amazing. At present a sixth part of the nation is crowded into provincial towns of more than thirty thousand inhabitants. In the reign of Charles the Second no provincial town in the kingdom contained thirty thousand inhabitants; and only four provincial towns contained so many as ten thousand inhabitants. Next to the capital, but next at an immense distance, stood Bristol, then the first English seaport, and Norwich, then the first English manufacturing town. Both have since that time been far outstripped by younger rivals; yet both have made great positive advances.

Pepys, who visited Bristol eight years after the Restoration, was struck by the splendour of the city. But his standard was not high, for he noted down as a wonder the circumstance that, in Bristol, a man might look round him and see nothing but houses. It seems that, in no other place with which he was acquainted, except London, did the buildings com-

pletely shut out the woods and fields. Large as Bristol might then appear, it occupied but a very small portion of the area on which it now stands. A few churches of eminent beauty rose out of a labyrinth of narrow lanes built upon vaults of no great solidity. If a coach or a cart entered those alleys, there was danger that it would be wedged between the houses, and danger also that it would break in the cellars. Goods were therefore conveyed about the town almost exclusively in trucks drawn by dogs ; and the richest inhabitants exhibited their wealth, not by riding in gilded carriages, but by walking the streets with trains of servants in rich liveries, and by keeping tables loaded with cheer. The pomp of the christenings and burials far exceeded what was seen at any other place in England. The hospitality of the city was widely renowned, and especially the collations with which the sugar refiners regaled their visitors. The repast was dressed in the furnace, and was accompanied by a rich brewage made of the best Spanish wine, and celebrated over the whole kingdom as Bristol milk. This luxury was supported by a thriving trade with the North American plantations and with the West Indies. The passion for colonial traffic was so strong that there was scarce a small shopkeeper in Bristol who had not a venture on board of some ship bound for Virginia or the Antilles. Some of these ventures indeed were not of the most honourable kind. There was, in the Transatlantic possessions of the Crown, a great demand for labour, and this demand was partly supplied by a system of crimping and kidnapping at the principal English seaports. Nowhere was this system found in such active and extensive operation as at Bristol. Even the first magistrates of that city were not ashamed to enrich themselves by so odious a commerce. The number of houses appears, from the returns of the hearth money, to have been, in the year 1685, just five thousand three hundred.

We can hardly suppose the number of persons in a house to have been greater than the city of London ; and in the city of London we learn from the best authority that there were then fifty-five persons to ten houses. The population of Bristol must therefore have been about twenty-nine thousand souls.

### Norwich

Norwich was the capital of a large and fruitful province. It was the residence of a bishop and of a chapter. It was the chief seat of the chief manufacture of the realm. Some men distinguished by learning and science had recently dwelt there ; and no place in the kingdom, except the capital and the universities, had more attractions for the curious. The library, the museum, the aviary, and the botanical garden of Sir Thomas Browne, were thought by Fellows of the Royal Society well worthy of a long pilgrimage. Norwich had also a court in miniature. In the heart of the city stood an old palace of the dukes of Norfolk, said to be the largest town house in the kingdom out of London. In this mansion, to which were annexed a tennis court, a bowling green, and a wilderness, stretching along the bank of the Wansum, the noble family of Howard frequently resided, and kept a state resembling that of petty sovereigns. Drink was served to guests in goblets of pure gold. The very tongs and shovels were of silver. Pictures by Italian masters adorned the walls. The cabinets were filled with a fine collection of gems purchased by that Earl of Arundel whose marbles are now among the ornaments of Oxford. Here, in the year 1671, Charles and his court were sumptuously entertained. Here, too, all comers were annually welcomed, from Christmas to Twelfth Night. Ale flowed in oceans for the populace. Three coaches, one of which had been built at a cost of five hundred pounds to con-



tain fourteen persons, were sent every afternoon round the city to bring ladies to the festivities ; and the dances were always followed by a luxurious banquet. When the Duke of Norfolk came to Norwich, he was greeted like a king returning to his capital. The bells of the cathedral and of Saint Peter Mancroft were rung ; the guns of the castle were fired ; and the mayor and aldermen waited on their illustrious fellow-citizen with complimentary addresses. In the year 1693 the population of Norwich was found, by actual enumeration, to be between twenty-eight and twenty-nine thousand souls.

### Shrewsbury

Far below Norwich, but still high in dignity and importance, were some other ancient capitals of shires. Conspicuous among these interesting cities were York, the capital of the north, and Exeter, the capital of the west. Neither can have contained much more than ten thousand inhabitants. Worcester, the queen of the cider land, had about eight thousand ; Derby not quite four thousand. Shrewsbury was the chief place of an extensive and fertile district. The court of the marches of Wales was held there. In the language of the gentry many miles round Wrekin, to go to Shrewsbury was to go to town. The provincial wits and beauties imitated, as well as they could, the fashions of Saint James's Park, in the walks along the side of the Severn. The inhabitants were about seven thousand.

### Leeds

Leeds was already the chief seat of the woollen manufactures of Yorkshire : but the elderly inhabitants could still remember the time when the first brick house, then and long after called the Red House, was built. They boasted loudly of their increasing

wealth, and of the immense sales of cloth which took place in the open air on the bridge. Hundreds, nay thousands of pounds, had been paid down in the course of one busy market day. The rising importance of Leeds had attracted the notice of successive governments. Charles the First had granted municipal privileges to the town. Oliver had invited it to send one member to the House of Commons. But from the returns of the hearth money it seems certain that the whole population of the borough, an extensive district which contains many hamlets, did not, in the reign of Charles the Second, exceed seven thousand souls. In 1841 there were more than a hundred and fifty thousand.

### Sheffield

About a day's journey south of Leeds, on the verge of a wild moorland tract, lay an ancient manor, now rich with cultivation, then barren and unclosed, which was known by the name of Hallamshire. Iron abounded there; and, from a very early period, the rude whittles fabricated there had been sold all over the kingdom. They had indeed been mentioned by Geoffrey Chaucer in one of his Canterbury Tales. But the manufacture appears to have made little progress during the three centuries which followed his time. This languor may perhaps be explained by the fact that the trade was, during almost the whole of this long period, subject to such regulations as the lord and his court leet thought fit to impose. The more delicate kinds of cutlery were either made in the capital, or brought from the Continent. It was not indeed till the reign of George the First that the English surgeons ceased to import from France those exquisitely fine blades which are required for operations on the human frame. Most of the Hallamshire forges were collected in a market-town which had sprung up near

the castle of the proprietor, and which, in the reign of James the First, had been a singularly miserable place, containing about two thousand inhabitants, of whom a third were half starved and half naked beggars. It seems certain from the parochial registers that the population did not amount to four thousand at the end of the reign of Charles the Second. The effects of a species of toil singularly unfavourable to the health and vigour of the human frame were at once discerned by every traveller. A large proportion of the people had distorted limbs. This is that Sheffield which now, with its dependencies, contains a hundred and twenty thousand souls, and which sends forth its admirable knives, razors, and lancets to the farthest ends of the world.

### Birmingham

Birmingham had not been thought of sufficient importance to send a member to Oliver's parliament. Yet the manufacturers of Birmingham were already a busy and thriving race. They boasted that their hardware was highly esteemed, not indeed as now, at Pekin and Lima, at Bokhara and Timbuctoo, but in London and even as far off as Ireland. They had acquired a less honourable renown as coiners of bad money. In allusion to their spurious groats, the Tory party had fixed on demagogues who hypocritically affected zeal against popery, the nickname of Birmingham. Yet in 1685 the population, which is now little less than two hundred thousand, did not amount to four thousand. Birmingham buttons were just beginning to be known. of Birmingham guns nobody had yet heard; and the place whence, two generations later, the magnificent editions of Baskerville went forth to astonish all the librarians of Europe, did not contain a single regular shop where a Bible or an almanack could be bought. On market days a bookseller named Michael Johnson, the father of the

great Samuel Johnson, came over from Lichfield, and opened a stall during a few hours. This supply of literature was long found adequate to the demand.

### Buxton and Tunbridge Wells

England was not, in the seventeenth century, destitute of watering places. The gentry of Derbyshire and of the neighbouring counties repaired to Buxton, where they were crowded into low wooden sheds, and regaled with oatcake, and with a viand which the hosts called mutton, but which the guests strongly suspected to be dog. Tunbridge Wells, lying within a day's journey of the capital, and in one of the richest and most highly civilized parts of the kingdom, had much greater attractions. At present we see there a town which would, a hundred and sixty years ago, have ranked, in population, fourth or fifth among the towns of England. The brilliancy of the shops and the luxury of the private dwellings far surpasses anything that England could then show. When the court, soon after the Restoration, visited Tunbridge Wells, there was no town: but, within a mile of the spring, rustic cottages, somewhat cleaner and neater than the ordinary cottages of that time, were scattered over the heath. Some of these cabins were movable, and were carried on sledges from one part of the common to another. To these huts men of fashion, wearied with the din and smoke of London, sometimes came in the summer to breathe fresh air, and to catch a glimpse of rural life. During the season a kind of fair was daily held near the fountain. The wives and daughters of the Kentish farmers came from the neighbouring villages with cream, cherries, wheatears, and quails. To chaffer with them, to flirt with them, to praise their straw hats and tight heels, was a refreshing pastime to voluptuaries sick of the airs of actresses and maids of honour. Milliners, toymen, and jewellers came down

from London, and opened a bazaar under the trees. In one booth the politician might find his coffee and the *London Gazette* ; in another were gamblers playing deep at basset ; and, on fine evenings, the fiddles were in attendance, and there were morris dances on the elastic turf of the bowling green. In 1685 a subscription had just been raised among those who frequented the wells for building a church, which the Tories, who then domineered everywhere, insisted on dedicating to Saint Charles the Martyr.

### Bath

But at the head of the English watering-places, without a rival, was Bath. The springs of that city had been renowned from the days of the Romans. It had been, during many centuries, the seat of a bishop. The sick repaired thither from every part of the realm. The king sometimes held his court there. Nevertheless, Bath was then a maze of only four or five hundred houses, crowded within an old wall in the vicinity of the Avon. Pictures of what were considered as the finest of those houses are still extant, and greatly resemble the lowest rag-shops and pothouses of Radcliffe Highway. Even then, indeed, travellers complained of the narrowness and meanness of the streets. That beautiful city which charms even eyes familiar with the masterpieces of Bramante and Palladio, and which the genius of Anstey and of Smollett, of Frances Burney and of Jane Austen, has made classic ground, had not begun to exist. Milsom Street itself was an open field lying far beyond the walls ; and hedges intersected the space which is now covered by the Crescent and the Circus. The poor patients to whom the waters had been recommended lay on straw in a place which, to use the language of a contemporary physician, was a covert rather than a lodging. As to the comforts and luxuries which were to be

found in the interior of the houses of Bath by the fashionable visitors who resorted thither in search of health or amusement, we possess information more complete and minute than can generally be obtained on such subjects. A writer who published an account of that city, about sixty years after the Revolution, has accurately described the changes which had taken place within his own recollection. He assures us that in his younger days the gentlemen who visited the springs slept in rooms hardly as good as the garrets which he lived to see occupied by footmen. The floors of the dining rooms were uncarpeted, and were coloured brown with a wash made of soot and small beer, in order to hide the dirt. Not a wainscot was painted. Not a hearth or chimney piece was of marble. A slab of common freestone and fire-irons which had cost from three to four shillings were thought sufficient for any fireplace. The best apartments were hung with coarse woollen stuff, and were furnished with rush-bottomed chairs. Readers who take an interest in the progress of civilization and of the useful arts will be grateful to the humble topographer who has recorded these facts, and will perhaps wish that historians of far higher pretensions had sometimes spared a few pages from military evolutions and political intrigues, for the purpose of letting us know how the parlours and bedchambers of our ancestors looked.

## St. Peter's Chapel in the Tower

(LORD MACAULAY)

IN truth there is no sadder spot on the earth than that little cemetery. Death is there associated, not, as in Westminster Abbey and Saint Paul's, with genius and virtue, with public veneration and with imperishable

renown ; not, as in our humblest churches and churchyards, with everything that is most endearing in social and domestic charities ; but with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny, with the savage triumph of implacable enemies, with the inconstancy, the ingratitude, the cowardice of friends, with all the miseries of fallen greatness and of blighted fame Thither have been carried, through successive ages, by the rude hands of gaolers, without one mourner following, the bleeding relics of men who had been the captains of armies, the leaders of parties, the oracles of senates, and the ornaments of courts. Thither was borne, before the window where Jane Grey was praying, the mangled corpse of Guilford Dudley Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and Protector of the Realm, reposes there by the brother whom he murdered There has mouldered away the headless trunk of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and Cardinal of Saint Vitalis, a man worthy to have lived in a better age, and to have died in a better cause. There are laid John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, Lord High Admiral, and Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, Lord High Treasurer. There, too, is another Essex, on whom nature and fortune had lavished all their bounties in vain, and whom valour, grace, genius, royal favour, popular applause, conducted to an early and ignominious doom. Not far off sleep two chiefs of the great house of Howard, Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, and Philip, eleventh Earl of Arundel Here and there, among the thick graves of unquiet and aspiring statesmen, lie more delicate sufferers ; Margaret of Salisbury, the last of the proud name of Plantagenet, and those two fair queens who perished by the jealous rage of Henry. Such was the dust with which the dust of Monmouth mingled.

## New London Bridge

(HARRIET MARTINEAU)

[Harriet Martineau (1802-76) was born in Norwich, her family being of French descent. She turned to authorship as a solace for deafness, and wrote many volumes which, while exhibiting little real genius, yet possess considerable merit. The passages here given are taken from her *History of England during the Thirty Years' Peace, 1816-46* ]

THE opening of the New London Bridge by their Majesties in August of 1831, was kept as a holiday throughout London ; and the occasion was truly a great one. This was a farewell to the old bridge, with its memories of a thousand years ; and here was a far surpassing work, which might carry on the mind to a thousand years more. Here it was, in its strength and grace, bestriding the flood with its five wide elliptical arches, without obstructing the stream ; and here it was likely to stand, perhaps till bridges should be wanted no more. The King was in an enthusiasm ; so exhilarating did he find the grandeur of the scene and the beauty of the day. He told the gentlemen of the Bridge Committee, as he stepped out of his barge, that he was most happy to see them on London Bridge ; that it was certainly a most beautiful edifice, and that the spectacle was in every way the grandest, and the most delightful that he had ever had the pleasure to witness.—It was towards the end of 1832 that the last stone of the last arch of old London Bridge dropped into the river ; and as the circles on the water were effaced, a historical scroll of many centuries seemed to be closed for ever



## The Bristol Riots of 1831

(HARRIET MARTINEAU)

THE Bristol mobs have always been noted for their brutality ; and the outbreak now was such as to amaze and confound the whole kingdom . . . Nothing like these Bristol riots had happened since the Birmingham riots in 1791.

London rogues could have had no such power in this case if the political and moral state of Bristol had not been bad. Its political state was disgraceful. The venality of its elections was notorious. It had a close corporation between whom and the citizens there was no community of feeling on municipal subjects. The lower parts of the city were the harbourage of probably a worse seaport populace than any other place in England, while the police were ineffective and demoralized. There was no city in which a greater amount of savagery lay beneath a society proud, exclusive, and mutually repellent, rather than enlightened and accustomed to social co-operation. . . . Of this city, Sir Charles Wetherell—then at the height of his unpopularity as a vigorous opponent of the Reform Bill—was Recorder ; and there he had to go, in the last days of October, in his judicial capacity. . .

On Saturday, October 29th, Sir Charles Wetherell entered Bristol in pomp : and before he reached the Mansion House at noon, he must have been pretty well convinced, by the hootings and throwing of stones, that he had better have forgone the procession. For some hours, the special constables and the noisy mob in front of the Mansion House exchanged discourtesies of an emphatic character , but there was no actual violence till night. At night, the Mansion House was attacked ; and the Riot Act was read ; but the military were not brought down, as they ought

to have been, to clear the streets. The Mayor had "religious scruples," and was "humane"; and his indecision was not overborne by any aid from his brother magistrates. When the military were brought in, it was after violence had been committed, and when the passions of the mob were much excited. Sir Charles Wetherell escaped from the city that night. During the dark hours sounds were heard provocative of further riot,—shouts in the streets, and the hammering of workmen who were boarding up the lower windows of the Mansion House, and the neighbouring dwellings—On the Sunday morning, the rioters broke into the Mansion House, without opposition and from the time they got into the cellars, all went wrong. Hungry wretches and boys broke the necks of the bottles, and Queen Square was strewed with the bodies of the dead drunk. The soldiers were left without orders; and their officers without that sanction of the magistracy in the absence of which they could not act, but only parade; and in this parading some of the soldiers naturally lost their tempers, and spoke and made gestures on their own account which did not tend to the soothing of the mob. This mob never consisted of more than five or six hundred; and twenty thousand orderly persons attended the churches and chapels that day, to whom no appeal on behalf of peace and the law was made. At a word through the pastors from the magistrates, indicating how they should act, the heads of these families could easily have co-operated to secure the protection of the city. The mob declared openly what they were going to do; and they went to work unchecked—armed with staves and bludgeons from the quays, and with iron palisades from the Mansion House—to break open and burn the Bridewell, the Jail, the Bishop's Palace, the Custom House, and Queen's Square. They gave half an hour's notice to the inhabitants of each house in the Square, which

they then set fire to in regular succession, till two sides, each measuring 550 feet, lay in smoking ruins. The bodies of the drunken were seen roasting in the fire. The greater number of the rioters were believed to be under twenty years of age and some were mere children—some Sunday scholars, hitherto well-conducted and it may be questioned whether one in ten knew anything of the Reform Bill, or the offences of Sir Charles Wetherell.

## “ Men and Cities ”

(GEORGE BORROW)

[George Henry Borrow was born in Norfolk in 1803. His father, a militia captain, on his retirement settled at Norwich. Borrow himself did not delight in city life; his restless, reserved spirit sought rather the freer life of the open air. Yet London powerfully impressed him, and he, to whom the “wind on the heath” was always the greatest gift of Nature, yet felt his spirit much moved by contemplating the Thames from London Bridge. The first two extracts given below are from *Lavengro*, and the third from *Wild Wales*.]

### Norwich

FROM the wild scenes which I have attempted to describe in the latter pages I must now transport the reader to others of a widely different character. He must suppose himself no longer in Ireland, but in the eastern corner of merry England. Bogs, ruins, and mountains have disappeared amidst the vapours of the west: I have nothing more to say of them; the region in which we are now is not famous for objects of that kind: perhaps it flatters itself that it can produce fairer and better things, of some of which let me speak; there is a fine old city before us, and first of that let me speak.

A fine old city, truly, is that, view it from whatever side you will ; but it shows best from the east, where the ground, bold and elevated, overlooks the fair and fertile valley in which it stands. Gazing from those heights, the eye beholds a scene which cannot fail to awaken, even in the least sensitive bosom, feelings of pleasure and admiration. At the foot of the heights flows a narrow and deep river, with an antique bridge communicating with a long and narrow suburb, flanked on either side by rich meadows of the brightest green, beyond which spreads the city ; the fine old city, perhaps the most curious specimen at present extant of the genuine old English town. Yes, there it spreads from north to south, with its venerable houses, its numerous gardens, its thrice twelve churches, its mighty mound, which, if tradition speaks true, was raised by human hands to serve as the grave-heap of an old heathen king, who sits deep within it, with his sword in his hand, and his gold and silver treasures about him. There is a grey old castle upon the top of that mighty mound ; and yonder, rising three hundred feet above the soil, from among those noble forest trees, behold that old Norman master-work, that cloud-encircled cathedral spire, around which a garrulous army of rooks and choughs continually wheel their flight. Now, who can wonder that the children of that fine old city are proud of her, and offer up prayers for her prosperity ? I, myself, who was not born within her walls, offer up prayers for her prosperity, that want may never visit her cottages, vice her palaces, and that the abomination of idolatry may never pollute her temples. Ha, idolatry ! the reign of idolatry has been over there for many a long year, never more, let us hope, to return ; brave hearts in that old town have borne witness against it, and sealed their testimony with their hearts' blood—most precious to the Lord is the blood of His saints ! we are not far from hallowed ground. Observe ye not yon chalky

precipice, to the right of the Norman bridge? On this side of the stream, upon its brow, is a piece of ruined wall, the last relic of what was of old a stately pile, whilst at its foot is a place called Lollards' Hole; and with good reason, for many a saint of God has breathed his last beneath that white precipice, bearing witness against popish idolatry, midst flame and pitch; many a grisly procession has advanced along that suburb, across the old bridge, towards the Lollards' Hole: furious priests in front, a calm pale martyr in the midst, a pitying multitude behind. It has had its martyrs, the venerable old town!

Ah! there is good blood in that old city, and in the whole circumjacent region of which it is the capital. The Angles possessed the land at an early period, which, however, they were eventually compelled to share with hordes of Danes and Northmen, who flocked thither across the sea to found hearthsteads on its fertile soil. The present race, a mixture of Angles and Danes, still preserve much which speaks strongly of their northern ancestry; amongst them ye will find the light brown hair of the north, the strong and burly forms of the north, many a wild superstition, ay, and many a wild name connected with the ancient history of the north and its sublime mythology; the warm heart and the strong heart of the old Danes and Saxons still beats in those regions, and there ye will find, if anywhere, old northern hospitality and kindness of manner, united with energy, perseverance, and dauntless intrepidity; better soldiers or mariners never bled in their country's battles than those nurtured in those regions, and within those old walls. It was yonder, to the west, that the great naval hero of Britain first saw the light, he who annihilated the sea pride of Spain, and dragged the humbled banner of France in triumph at his stern. He was born yonder towards the west, and of him there is a glorious relic in that old town; in its dark flint guldhouse, the roof

of which you can just descry rising above that maze of buildings, in the upper hall of justice, is a species of glass shrine, in which the relic is to be seen ; a sword of curious workmanship, the blade is of keen Toledan steel, the hilt of ivory and mother-of-pearl. 'Tis the sword of Cordova, won in bloodiest fray off Saint Vincent's promontory, and presented by Nelson to the old capital of the much-loved land of his birth. Yes, the proud Spaniard's sword is to be seen in yonder guildhouse, in the glass case affixed to the wall : many other relics has the good old town, but none prouder than the Spaniard's sword.

### Borrow in London

So I set out on my walk to see the wonders of the big city, and, as chance would have it, I directed my course to the east. The day, as I have already said, had become very fine, so that I saw the great city to advantage, and the wonders thereof : and much I admired all I saw , and, amongst other things, the huge cathedral, standing so proudly on the most commanding ground in the big city ; and I looked up to the mighty dome, surmounted by a golden cross, and I said within myself, " That dome must needs be the finest in the world " ; and I gazed upon it till my eyes reeled, and my brain became dizzy, and I thought that the dome would fall and crush me ; and I shrank within myself, and struck yet deeper into the heart of the big city.

" O Cheapside ! Cheapside ! " said I, as I advanced up that mighty thoroughfare, " truly thou art a wonderful place for hurry, noise and riches ! Men talk of the bazaars of the East—I have never seen them—but I daresay that, compared with thee, they are poor places, silent places, abounding with empty boxes, O thou pride of London's east !—mighty mart of old renown !—for thou art not a place of yesterday :—

long before the Roses red and white battled in fair England, thou didst exist—a place of throng and bustle—a place of gold and silver, perfumes and fine linen. Centuries ago thou couldst extort the praises even of the fiercest foes of England. Fierce bards of Wales, sworn foes of England, sang thy praises centuries ago ; and even the fiercest of them all, Red Julius himself, wild Glendower's bard, had a word of praise for London's 'Cheape,' for so the bards of Wales styled thee in their flowing odes. Then, if those who were not English, and hated England, and all connected therewith, had yet much to say in thy praise, when thou wast inferior to what thou art now, why should true-born Englishmen, or those who call themselves so, turn up their noses at thee, and scoff thee at the present day, as I believe they do ? But, let others do as they will, I, at least, who am not only an Englishman, but an East Englishman, will not turn up my nose at thee, but will praise and extol thee, calling thee mart of the world—a place of wonder and astonishment !—and, were it right and fitting to wish that anything should endure for ever, I would say prosperity to Cheapside, throughout all ages—may it be the world's resort for merchandise, world without end ”

And when I had passed through the Cheape I entered another street, which led up a kind of ascent, and which proved to be the street of the Lombards, called so from the name of its first founders, and I walked rapidly up the street of the Lombards, neither looking to the right nor left, for it had no interest for me, though I had a kind of consciousness that mighty things were being transacted behind its walls : but it wanted the throng, bustle, and outward magnificence of the Cheape, and it had never been spoken of by “ ruddy bards ” ! And, when I had got to the end of the street of the Lombards, I stood still for some time, deliberating within myself whether I should turn to

the right or the left, or go straight forward, and at last I turned to the right, down a street of rapid descent, and presently found myself upon a bridge which traversed the river which runs by the big city.

A strange kind of bridge it was ; huge and massive, and seemingly of great antiquity. It had an arched back, like that of a hog, a high balustrade, and at either side, at intervals, were stone bowers bulking over the river, but open on the other side, and furnished with a semicircular bench. Though the bridge was wide—very wide—it was all too narrow for the concourse upon it. Thousands of human beings were pouring over the bridge. But what chiefly struck my attention was a double row of carts and wagons, the generality drawn by horses as large as elephants, each row striving hard in a different direction, and not unfrequently brought to a standstill. Oh the cracking of whips, the shouts and oaths of the carters, and the grating of wheels upon the enormous stones that formed the pavement ! In fact, there was a wild hurly-burly upon the bridge, which nearly deafened me. But, if upon the bridge there was a confusion below it there was a confusion ten times confounded. The tide, which was fast ebbing, obstructed by the immense piers of the old bridge, poured beneath the arches with a fall of several feet, forming in the river below as many whirlpools as there were arches. Truly tremendous was the roar of the descending waters, and the bellow of the tremendous gulfs, which swallowed them for a time, and then cast them forth, foaming and frothing from their horrid wombs. Slowly advancing along the bridge, I came to the highest point, and there I stood still, close beside one of the stone bowers, in which, beside a fruit stall, sat an old woman, with a pan of charcoal at her feet, and a book in her hand, in which she appeared to be reading intently. There I stood, just above the principal arch, looking through the balustrade at the scene that



presented itself—and such a scene ! Towards the left bank of the river, a forest of masts, thick and close, as far as the eye could reach, spacious wharfs, surmounted with gigantic edifices , and, far away, Cæsar's Castle, with its White Tower. To the right, another forest of masts, and a maze of buildings from which, here and there, shot up to the sky chimneys taller than Cleopatra's Needle, vomiting forth huge wreaths of that black smoke which forms the canopy—occasionally a gorgeous one—of the more than Babel city. Stretching before me, the troubled breast of the mighty river, and, immediately below, the main whirlpool of the Thames—the maelstrom of the bulwarks of the middle arch—a grisly pool, which with its superabundance of horror, fascinated me. Who knows but I should have leapt into its depths ?—I have heard of such things—but for a rather startling occurrence which broke the spell. As I stood upon the bridge, gazing into the jaws of the pool, a small boat shot suddenly through the arch beneath my feet. There were three persons in it ; an oarsman in the middle, whilst a man and woman sat at the stern. I shall never forget the thrill of horror which went through me at this sudden apparition. What !—a boat—a small boat—passing beneath that arch into yonder roaring gulf ! Yes, yes, down through that awful waterway, with more than the swiftness of an arrow, shot the boat or skiff, right into the jaws of the pool. A monstrous breaker curls over the prow—there is no hope ; the boat is swamped, and all drowned in that strangling vortex. No ! the boat, which appeared to have the buoyancy of a feather, skipped over the threatening horror, and, the next moment, was out of danger, the boatman—a true boatman of Cockaigne that—elevating one of his sculls in sign of triumph, the man hallooing, and the woman, a true English-woman that—of a certain class—waving her shawl. Whether any one observed them save myself, or

whether the feat was a common one, I know not ; but nobody appeared to take any notice of them. As for myself, I was so excited that I strove to clamber up the balustrade of the bridge, in order to obtain a better view of the daring adventurers.

### Borrow at Merthyr

After breakfast I went to see the Cyfartha Fawr ironworks, generally considered to be the great wonder of the place. After some slight demur I obtained permission from the superintendent to inspect them. What shall I say about the Cyfartha Fawr ? I had best say but very little. I saw enormous furnaces. I saw streams of molten metal. I saw a long ductile piece of red-hot iron being operated upon. I saw millions of sparks flying about. I saw an immense wheel impelled round with frightful velocity by a steam-engine of two hundred and forty horse power. I heard all kinds of dreadful sounds. The general effect was stunning.

After seeing the Cyfartha I roamed about, making general observations. The mountain of dross which had startled me on the preceding night with its terrific glare, and which stands to the north-west of the town, looked now nothing more than an immense dark heap of cinders. It is only when the shades of night have settled down that the fire within manifests itself, making the hill appear an immense glowing mass. All the hills around the town, some of which are very high, have a scorched and blackened look. An old Anglesea bard, rather given to bombast, wishing to extol the abundant cheer of his native isle said : " The hills of Ireland are blackened by the smoke from the kitchens of Mona " With much more propriety might a bard of the banks of the Taf, who should wish to apologize for the rather smutty appearance of his native isle exclaim : " The hills around the Taf once so green

are blackened by the smoke from the chimneys of Merthyr." The houses are in general low and mean, and built of rough grey stone. Merthyr, however, can show several remarkable edifices, though of a gloomy horrid Satanic character. There is the hall of the Iron, with its arches, from whence proceeds incessantly a thundering noise of hammers. Then there is an edifice at the foot of a mountain, half-way up the side of which is a blasted forest and on the top an enormous crag. A truly wonderful edifice it is, such as Bos would have imagined had he wanted to paint the palace of Satan. There it stands: a house of reddish brick with a slate roof—four horrid black towers behind, two of them belching forth smoke and flame from their tops—holes like pigeon holes here and there—two immense white chimneys standing by themselves. What edifice can that be of such strange mad details? I ought to have put that question to some one in Tydvil, but did not, though I stood staring at the diabolical structure with my mouth open. It was of no use putting the question to myself here.

## Our Society

(MRS GASKELL)

[Mrs Gaskell (1810-65) was born in London, but while still an infant was taken to Knutsford, a quaint little Cheshire town, where she grew up. Her first book, *Mary Barton*, showed a deep and sympathetic insight into the lives of the workers of the industrial towns, and this same quality was manifest in *North and South*. But her greatest work is *Cranford*, where, with infinite charm and whimsical affection, she depicts Knutsford in her girlhood. "Drumble" is Manchester.]

IN the first place, Cranford is in possession of the Amazons; all the holders of houses, above a certain rent, are women. If a married couple come to settle

in the town, somehow the gentleman disappears ; he is either fairly frightened to death by being the only man in the Cranford evening parties, or he is accounted for by being with his regiment, his ship, or closely engaged in business all the week in the great neighbouring commercial town of Drumble, distant only twenty miles on a railroad. In short, whatever does become of the gentlemen, they are not at Cranford. What could they do if they were there ? The surgeon has his round of thirty miles and sleeps at Cranford ; but every man cannot be a surgeon. For keeping the trim gardens full of choice flowers without a weed to speck them ; for frightening away little boys who look wistfully at the said flowers through the railings ; for rushing out at the geese that occasionally venture into the gardens if the gates are left open ; for deciding all questions of literature and politics without troubling themselves with unnecessary reasons or arguments ; for obtaining clear and correct knowledge of everybody's affairs in the parish ; for keeping their neat maid-servants in admirable order ; for kindness (somewhat dictatorial) to the poor, and real tender good offices to each other whenever they are in distress,—the ladies of Cranford are quite sufficient. " A man," as one of them observed to me once, " is *so* in the way in the house ! " Although the ladies of Cranford know all each other's proceedings, they are exceedingly indifferent to each other's opinions. Indeed, as each has her own individuality, not to say eccentricity, pretty strongly developed, nothing is so easy as verbal retaliation ; but, somehow, goodwill reigns among them to a considerable degree.

The Cranford ladies have only an occasional little quarrel, spirted out in a few peppery words and angry jerks of the head ; just enough to prevent the even tenor of their lives from becoming too flat. Their dress is very independent of fashion ; as they observe,

“ What does it signify how we dress here at Cranford, where everybody knows us ? ” And if they go from home, their reason is equally cogent, “ What does it signify how we dress here, where nobody knows us ? ” The materials of their clothes are, in general, good and plain, and most of them are nearly as scrupulous as Miss Tyler, of cleanly memory ; but I will answer for it, the last gigot, the last tight and scanty petticoat in wear in England, was seen in Cranford—and seen without a smile.

I can testify to a magnificent family red silk umbrella, under which a gentle little spinster, left alone of many brothers and sisters, used to patter to church on rainy days. Have you any red silk umbrellas in London ? We had a tradition of the first that had ever been seen in Cranford ; and the little boys mobbed it, and called it “ a stick in petticoats.” It may have been the very red silk one I have described, held by a strong father over a troop of little ones ; the poor little lady—the survivor of all—could scarcely carry it.

I imagine that a few of the gentlefolks of Cranford were poor, and had some difficulty in making both ends meet ; but they were like the Spartans, and concealed their smart under a smiling face. We none of us spoke of money, because that subject savoured of commerce and trade, and though some might be poor, we were all aristocratic. The Cranfordians had that kindly *esprit de corps* which made them overlook all deficiencies in success when some among them tried to conceal their poverty. I never shall forget the dismay felt when a certain Captain Brown came to live at Cranford, and openly spoke about his being poor—not in a whisper to an intimate friend, but in the public street ! in a loud military voice ! alleging his poverty as a reason for not taking a particular house. The ladies of Cranford were already rather moaning over the invasion of their territories by a man and a gentle-

man. He was a half-pay Captain, and had obtained some situation on a neighbouring railroad, which had been vehemently petitioned against by the little town ; and if, in addition to his masculine gender, and his connection with the obnoxious railroad, he was so brazen as to talk of being poor—why, then, indeed he must be sent to Coventry. Death was as true and as common as poverty ; yet people never spoke about that, loud out in the streets. It was a word not to be mentioned to ears polite. We had tacitly agreed to ignore that any with whom we associated on terms of visiting equality could ever be prevented by poverty from doing anything that they wished. If we walked to or from a party, it was because the night was so fine, or the air so refreshing, not because sedan chairs were expensive. If we wore prints, instead of summer silks, it was because we preferred a washing material ; and so on, till we blinded ourselves to the vulgar fact that we were, all of us, people of very moderate means. Of course, then, we did not know what to make of a man who could speak of poverty as if it was not a disgrace. Yet, somehow, Captain Brown made himself respected in Cranford ; and, at last, his excellent masculine common sense, and his facility in devising expedients to overcome domestic dilemmas, had gained him an extraordinary place as authority among the Cranford ladies. He himself went on in his course as unaware of his popularity as he had been of the reverse ; and I am sure he was startled one day when he found his advice so highly esteemed as to make some counsel which he had given in jest to be taken in sober, serious earnest.

It was on this subject : An old lady had an Alderney cow, which she looked upon as a daughter. You could not pay the short quarter-of-an-hour call without being told of the wonderful milk or wonderful intelligence of this animal. The whole town knew and kindly regarded Miss Betsy Barker's Alderney ; there-

fore, great was the sympathy and regret when, in an unguarded moment, the poor cow tumbled into a lime-pit. She moaned so loudly that she was soon heard and rescued ; but meanwhile the poor beast had lost most of her hair, and came out looking naked, cold, and miserable, in a bare skin. Everybody pitied the animal, though a few could not restrain their smiles at her droll appearance. Miss Betsy Barker absolutely cried with sorrow and dismay ; and it was said she thought of trying a bath of oil. This remedy, perhaps, was recommended by some one of the number whose advice she asked ; but the proposal, if ever it was made, was knocked on the head by Captain Brown's decided, " Get her a flannel waistcoat and flannel drawers, ma'am, if you wish to keep her alive. But my advice is, kill the poor creature at once."

Miss Betsy Barker dried her eyes, and thanked the Captain heartily, she set to work, and by and by all the town turned out to see the Alderney meekly going to her pasture, clad in dark grey flannel. I have watched her myself many a time. Do you ever see cows dressed in grey flannel in London ?

## Written in Edinburgh

(ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM)

[Arthur Henry Hallam (1811-33) was the son of the great historian. Educated at Cambridge, he became a close friend of Alfred Tennyson. His health was weak, and he died at Vienna when only twenty-two years of age ; he had written some promising poems himself, but is more likely to be remembered as one whose death inspired Tennyson's *In Memoriam* ]

EVEN thus, methinks, a city reared should be,  
Yea, an imperial city, that might hold  
Five times a hundred noble towns in fee,  
And either with their might of Babel old,

Or the rich Roman pomp of empery  
Might stand compare, highest in arts enrolled,  
Highest in arms ; brave tenement for the free,  
Who never crouch to thrones, or sin for gold.

Thus should her towers be raised—with vicinage  
Of clear bold hills, that curve her very streets,  
As if to vindicate 'mid choicest seats  
Of art, abiding Nature's majesty ;  
And the broad sea beyond, in calm or rage  
Chainless alike, and teaching Liberty.

## How Beverley rose against the King

(JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE)

[James Anthony Froude (1818–94) possessed, with other qualities that combined to make him a great historian, a fervid imagination and a power of vivid description given to few. He himself has said that “our imagination can but feebly penetrate” to the life of a past age. Yet in the first of the two extracts given below (from his *History of England*) he enables us to realize something of the way in which the movement known as the Pilgrimage of Grace shook the minds of men and swept the northern cities into the current of revolt against Henry VIII, in the second he depicts such a scene of heroism as always fired his soul.]

LEAVING his own county, he again hastened back to his command in Lincolnshire ; and by this time he heard of Suffolk's advance with the King's answer to the petition. He rode post to Lincoln, and reached the town to find the commons and the gentlemen on the verge of fighting among themselves. He endeavoured to make his way into the cathedral close, but finding himself suspected by the commons, and being told that he would be murdered if he persevered, he remained in concealment till Suffolk had

*He, Robert Aske.*



made known the intentions of the government ; and then, perhaps satisfied that the opportunity was past, perhaps believing that if not made use of on the instant it might never recur, perhaps resigning himself to be guided by events, he went back at full speed to Yorkshire.

And events had decided : whatever his intentions may have been, the choice was no longer open to him.

As he rode down at midnight to the bank of the Humber, the clash of the alarm-bells came pealing far over the water. From hill to hill, from church tower to church tower, the warning lights were shooting. The fishermen on the German Ocean watched them flickering in the darkness from Spurnhead to Scarborough, from Scarborough to Berwick-upon-Tweed. They streamed westward, over the long marshes across Spalding Moor ; up the Ouse and the Wharf, to the watershed where the rivers flow into the Irish Sea. The mountains of Westmoreland sent on the message to Kendal, to Cockermouth, to Penrith, to Carlisle ; and for days and nights there was one loud storm of bells and blaze of beacons from the Trent to the Cheviot Hills.

All Yorkshire was in movement. Strangely, too, as Aske assures us, he found himself the object of an unsought distinction. His own name was the watchword which every tongue was crying. In his absence an address had gone out around the towns, had been hung on church doors, and posted on market-crosses, which bore his signature, though, as he protested, it was neither written by himself nor with his consent. Ill composed, but with a rugged eloquence, it called upon all good Englishmen to make a stand for the Church of Christ, which wicked men were destroying, for the commonwealth of the realm, and for their own livings, which were stolen from them by impositions. For those who would join it should be well ; those who refused to join, or dared to resist, should be under

Christ's curse, and be held guilty of all the Christian blood which should be shed.

Whoever wrote the letter, it did its work. One scene out of many will illustrate the effect.

William Stapleton, a friend of Aske, and a brother barrister, also bound to London for the term, was spending a few days at the Grey Friars at Beverley, with his brother Christopher. The latter had been out of health, and had gone thither for change of air with his wife. The young lawyer was to have set out over the Humber on the 4th of October. At three in the morning his servant woke him, with the news that the Lincolnshire beacons were on fire, and the country was impassable. Beverley itself was in the greatest excitement, the sick brother was afraid to be left alone, and William Stapleton agreed for the present to remain and take care of him. On Sunday morning they were startled by the sound of the alarm-bell. A servant, who was sent out to learn what had happened, brought in word that an address had arrived from Robert Aske, and that a proclamation was out, under the town seal, calling on every man to repair to Westwood Green, under the walls of the Grey Friars, and to be sworn in to the commons. Christopher Stapleton, a sensible man, made somewhat timid by illness, ordered all doors to be locked and bolted, and gave directions that no one of his household should stir. His wife, a hater of Protestants, an admirer of Queen Catherine, of the Pope, and the old religion, was burning with sympathy for the insurgents. The family confessor appeared on the scene, a certain Father Bonaventure, taking the lady's part, and they two together "went forth out of the door among the crowd." "God's blessing on ye," William Stapleton heard his sister-in-law cry—"Speed ye well," the priest cried; "speed ye well in your godly purposes." The people rushed about them. "Where are your husband and his brother?" they shouted to her

"In the Freers," she answered. "Bring them out!" the cry rose. "Pull them out by the head; or we will burn the Freers and them within it." Back flew the lady in haste, and perhaps in scorn, to urge forward her hesitating lord—he wailing, wringing his hands, wishing himself out of the world; she exclaiming it was God's quarrel—let him rise and show himself a man. The dispute lingered; the crowd grew impatient; the doors were dashed in; they rushed into the hall, and thrust the oath down the throat of the reluctant gentleman, and as they surged back they swept the brother out with them upon the green. Five hundred voices were crying, "Captains! Captains!" and presently a shout rose above the rest, "Master William Stapleton shall be our captain!" And so it was to be: the priest Bonaventure had willed it so; and Stapleton, seeing worse would follow if he refused, consented.

It was like a contagion of madness—instantly he was wild like the rest. "Forward!" was the cry—whither, who knew or cared? only "Forward!" and as the multitude rocked to and fro, a splashed rider spurred through the streets, "like a man distraught," eyes staring, hair streaming, shouting, as he passed, that they should rise and follow, and flashing away like a meteor.

So went Sunday at Beverley, the 8th of October, 1536.

## How Skipton was held for the King

(JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE)

SKIPTON CASTLE alone in Yorkshire now held out for the crown.

With the defence of this place is connected an act of romantic heroism which deserves to be remembered.

Robert Aske, as we have seen, had two brothers, Christopher and John. In the hot struggle the ties of blood were of little moment, and when the West Riding rose, and they had to choose the part which they would take, "they determined rather to be hewn in gobbets than stain their allegiance." Being gallant gentlemen, instead of flying the county, they made their way with forty of their retainers to their cousin the Earl of Cumberland, and with him threw themselves into Skipton. The aid came in good time; for the day after their arrival the earl's whole retinue rode off in a body to the rebels, leaving him but a mixed household of some eighty people to garrison the castle. They were soon surrounded; but being well provisioned, and behind strong stone walls, they held the rebels at bay, and but for an unfortunate accident they could have faced the danger with cheerfulness. But unhappily the earl's family were in the heart of the danger.

Lady Eleanor Clifford, Lord Clifford's young wife, with three little children and several other ladies, were staying, when the insurrection burst out, at Bolton Abbey. Perhaps they had taken sanctuary there; or possibly they were on a visit, and were cut off by the suddenness of the rising. There, however, ten miles off among the glens and hills, the ladies were, and on the third day of the siege notice was sent to the earl that they should be held as hostages for his submission. The insurgents threatened that the day following Lady Eleanor and her infant son and daughters should be brought up in front of a storming party. After the ferocious murder of the Bishop of Lincoln's chancellor, no villainy was impossible; and it is likely that the Catholic rebellion would have been soiled by as deep an infamy as can be found in the English annals but for the adventurous courage of Christopher Aske. In the dead of the night, with the vicar of Skipton, a groom, and a boy, he stole through the camp of the

besiegers. He crossed the moors, with led horses, by unfrequented paths, and he "drew such a draught," he says, that he conveyed all the said ladies through the commons in safety, "so close and clean, that the same was never mistrusted nor perceived till they were within the castle"; a noble exploit, shining on the bypaths of history like a rare rich flower. Proudly the little garrison looked down, when day dawned, from the battlements, upon the fierce multitude who were howling below in baffled rage. A few days later, as if in scorn of their impotence, the same gallant gentleman flung open the gates, dropped the draw-bridge, and rode down in full armour, with his train, to the market-cross at Skipton, and there, after three long "Oyez's" he read aloud the king's proclamation in the midst of the crowd . . . "with leisure enough," he adds, in his disdainful way . . . "and that done, he returned to the castle."

## St. Ogg (Gainsborough)

(GEORGE ELIOT)

[George Eliot was the pen-name of Marian Evans (1819-80), one of the greatest of English novelists, and the unsurpassed painter of the characters and family life of early and mid-Victorian farmers and tradesmen. The following extract is taken from one of her best-known novels, *The Mill on the Floss*. "St Ogg" is Gainsborough.]

In order to see Mr. and Mrs. Clegg at home, we must enter the town of St. Ogg's—that venerable town with the red-fluted roofs and the broad warehouse gables, where the black ships unlade themselves of their burthens from the far north, and carry away in exchange, the precious inland products, the well-crushed

cheese and the soft fleeces, which my refined readers have doubtless become acquainted with through the medium of the best classic pastorals.

It is one of those old, old towns which impress one as a continuation and outgrowth of nature, as much as the nests of the bower-birds or the winding galleries of the white ants—a town which carries the traces of its long growth and history like a millennial tree, and has sprung up and developed in the same spot between the river and the low hill from the time when the Roman legions turned their backs on it from the camp on the hill-side, and the long-haired sea-kings came up the river and looked with fierce, eager eyes at the fatness of the land. It is a town “familiar with forgotten years.” The shadow of the Saxon hero-king still walks there fitfully, reviewing the scenes of his youth and love-time, and is met by the gloomier shadow of the dreadful heathen Dane, who was stabbed in the midst of his warriors by the sword of an invisible avenger, and who rises on autumn evenings like a white mist from his tumulus on the hill, and hovers in the court of the old hall by the river-side—the spot where he was thus miraculously slain in the days before the old hall was built. It was the Normans who began to build that fine old hall, which is like the town, telling of the thoughts and hands of widely-sundered generations ; but it is all so old that we look with loving pardon at its inconsistencies, and are well content that they who built the stone oriel, and they who built the Gothic façade and towers of finest small brickwork with the trefoil ornament, and the windows and battlements defined with stone, did not sacrilegiously pull down the ancient half-timbered body with its oak-roofed banquetting-hall.

But older even than this old hall is perhaps the bit of wall now built into the belfry of the parish church, and said to be a remnant of the original chapel dedicated to St. Ogg, the patron saint of this ancient

town, of whose history I possess several manuscript versions. I incline to the briefest, since, if it should not be wholly true, it is at least likely to contain the least falsehood. "Ogg the son of Beorl," says my private hagiographer, "was a boatman who gained a scanty living by ferrying passengers across the river Floss. And it came to pass, one evening when the winds were high, that there sat moaning by the brink of the river a woman with a child in her arms; and she was clad in rags, and had a worn and withered look, and she craved to be rowed across the river. And the men thereabout questioned her, and said, 'Wherefore dost thou desire to cross the river? Tarry till the morning, and take shelter here for the night; so shalt thou be wise, and not foolish.' Still she went on to mourn and crave. But Ogg the son of Beorl came up and said, 'I will ferry thee across; it is enough that thy heart needs it.' And he ferried her across. And it came to pass, when she stepped ashore, that her rags were turned into robes of flowing, and her face became bright with exceeding beauty, and there was a glory around it, so that she shed a light on the water like the moon in its brightness. And she said, 'Ogg the son of Beorl, thou art blessed in that thou didst not question and wrangle with the heart's need, but wast smitten with pity, and didst straightway relieve the same. And from henceforth whoso steps into thy boat shall be in no peril from the storm; and whenever it puts forth to the rescue, it shall save the lives both of men and beasts.' And when the floods came, many were saved by reason of that blessing on the boat. But when Ogg the son of Beorl died, behold, in the parting of his soul, the boat loosed itself from its moorings, and was floated with the ebbing tide in great swiftness to the ocean, and was seen no more. Yet it was witnessed in the floods of after-time that at the coming on of even Ogg the son of Beorl was always seen with his boat upon the wide-spreading

waters, and the Blessed Virgin sat in the prow, shedding a light around as of the moon in its brightness, so that the rowers in the gathering darkness took heart and pulled anew."

This legend, one sees, reflects from a far-off time the visitation of the floods, which, even when they left human life untouched, were widely fatal to the helpless cattle, and swept as sudden death over all smaller living things. But the town knew worse troubles even than the floods,—troubles of the civil wars, when it was a continual fighting-place, where first Puritans thanked God for the blood of the Loyalists, and then Loyalists thanked God for the blood of the Puritans. Many honest citizens lost all their possessions for conscience' sake in those times, and went forth beggared from their native town. Doubtless there are many houses standing now on which those honest citizens turned their backs in sorrow—quaint-gabled houses looking on the river, jammed between newer warehouses, and penetrated by surprising passages, which turn and turn at sharp angles till they lead you out on a muddy strand overflowed continually by the rushing tide.

## A City by Night

(CHARLES DICKENS)

[Charles Dickens (1812-70), probably still the most popular of English novelists, was a great lover of London, its crowded streets, its quaint, remote byways, and the varied types that peopled them. No one has portrayed with a more masterly touch the great city as it existed in his day. He was accustomed to take long night walks through the city streets, and when living in Italy, in 1844, felt that his power of writing was hindered by the absence of this source of inspiration. He wrote to Forster: "Did I tell you how many fountains we have here? No matter. If they played nectar they wouldn't



please me half so well as the West Middlesex waterworks at Devonshire Terrace "']

A WONDERFUL fact to reflect upon that every human creature is constituted to be that profound secret and mystery to every other. A solemn consideration, when I enter a great city by night, that every one of those darkly-clustered houses encloses its own secret ; that every room in every one of them encloses its own secret ; that every beating heart in the hundreds of thousands of breasts there, is, in some of its imaginings, a secret to the heart nearest it ! Something of the awfulness, even of Death itself, is referable to this. No more can I turn the leaves of this dear book that I loved, and vainly hope in time to read it all. No more can I look into the depths of this unfathomable water, wherein, as momentary lights glanced into it, I have had glimpses of buried treasure and other things submerged. It was appointed that the book should shut with a spring, for ever and for ever, when I had read but a page. It was appointed that the water should be locked in an eternal frost, when the light was playing on its surface, and I stood in ignorance on the shore. My friend is dead, my neighbour is dead, my love, the darling of my soul, is dead ; it is the inexorable consolidation and perpetuation of the secret that was always in that individuality, and which I shall carry in mine to my life's end. In any of the burial places in this city through which I pass, is there a sleeper more inscrutable than its busy inhabitants are, in their innermost personality, to me, or than I am to them ?

## Tellson's Bank

(CHARLES DICKENS)

TELLSON'S BANK by Temple Bar was an old-fashioned place, even in the year one thousand seven hundred

and eighty. It was very small, very dark, very ugly, very inconvenient. It was an old-fashioned place, moreover, in the moral attribute that the partners in the House were proud of its smallness, proud of its darkness, proud of its ugliness, proud of its inconvenientness. They were even boastful of its eminence in those particulars, and were fired by an express conviction that, if it were less objectionable, it would be less respectable. This was no passive belief, but an active weapon which they flashed at more convenient places of business. Tellson's (they said) wanted no elbow room, Tellson's wanted no light, Tellson's wanted no embellishment. Noakes and Co's might, or Snooks Brothers' might; but Tellson's, thank Heaven!—

Any one of these partners would have disinherited his son on the question of rebuilding Tellson's. In this respect the House was much on a par with the Country; which did very often disinherit its sons for suggesting improvements in laws and customs that had long been highly objectionable, but were only the more respectable.

Thus it had come to pass that Tellson's was the triumphant perfection of inconvenience. After bursting open a door of idiotic obstinacy with a weak rattle in its throat, you fell into Tellson's down two steps, and came to your senses in a miserable little shop, with two little counters, where the oldest of men made your cheque shake as if the wind rustled it, while they examined the signature by the dingiest of windows, which were always under a shower-bath of mud from Fleet Street, and which were made the dingier by their own iron bars proper, and the heavy shadow of Temple Bar. If your business necessitated your seeing "the House," you were put into a species of Condemned Hold at the back, where you meditated on a misspent life, until the House came with its hands in its pockets, and you could hardly blink at it in the dismal twilight.

Your money came out of, or went into, wormy old wooden drawers, particles of which flew up your nose and down your throat when they were opened and shut. Your bank notes had a musty odour, as if they were fast decomposing into rags again. Your plate was stowed away among the neighbouring cesspools, and evil communications corrupted its good polish in a day or two. Your deeds got into extemporized strong rooms made of kitchens and sculleries, and fretted all the fat out of their parchments into the banking house air. Your lighter boxes of family papers went upstairs into a Barmecide room, that always had a great dining table in it, and never had a dinner, and where, even in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty, the first letters written to you by your old love, or by your little children, were but newly released from the horror of being ogled, through the windows, by the heads exposed on Temple Bar with an insensate brutality and ferocity worthy of Abyssinia or Ashantee.

## Coketown

(CHARLES DICKENS)

COKETOWN, to which Messrs Bounderby and Gradgrind now walked, was a triumph of fact ; it had no greater taint of fancy in it than Mrs Gradgrind herself. Let us strike the keynote, Coke-town, before pursuing our tune.

It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it ; but, as matters stood, it was a town of unnatural red and black, like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling

dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work, and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and to-morrow, and every year the counterpart of the last and the next

These attributes of Coketown were in the main inseparable from the work by which it was sustained ; against them were to be set off comforts of life which found their way all over the world, and elegancies of life which made, we will not ask how much of the fine lady, who would scarcely bear to hear the place mentioned. The rest of its features were voluntary, and they were there.

You saw nothing in Coketown but what was severely workful. If the members of a religious persuasion built a chapel there—as the members of eighteen religious persuasions had done—they made it a pious warehouse of red brick, with sometimes (but this is only in highly ornamented examples) a bell in a bird-cage on top of it. The solitary exception was the New Church ; a stuccoed edifice with a square steeple over the door, terminating in four short pinnacles like florid wooden legs. All the public inscriptions in the town were painted alike, in severe characters of black and white. The gaol might have been the infirmary, the infirmary might have been the gaol, the Town-hall might have been either, or both, or anything else, for anything that appeared to the contrary in the graces of their construction. Fact, fact, fact, everywhere in the material aspect of the town ; fact, fact, fact, everywhere in the immaterial. The M'Choakumchild school

was all fact, and the school of design was all fact, and the relations between master and man were all fact, and everything was fact between the lying-in hospital and the cemetery, and what you couldn't state in figures, or show to be purchasable in the cheapest market and saleable in the dearest, was not, and never should be, world without end, Amen.

## Shy Neighbourhoods

(CHARLES DICKENS)

NOTHING in shy neighbourhoods perplexes my mind more than the bad company birds keep. Foreign birds often get into good society, but British birds are inseparable from low associates. There is a whole street of them in St Giles's ; and I always find them in poor and immoral neighbourhoods, convenient to the public-house and the pawnbroker's. They seem to lead people into drinking, and even the man who makes their cages usually gets into a chronic state of black eye. Why is this ? Also, they will do things for people in short-skirted velvet coats with bone buttons, or in sleeved waistcoats and fur caps, which they cannot be persuaded by the respectable orders of society to undertake. In a dirty court in Spitalfields, once, I found a goldfinch drawing his own water, and drawing as much of it as if he were in a consuming fever. That goldfinch lived at a bird shop, and offered, in writing, to barter himself against old clothes, empty bottles, or even kitchen-stuff. Surely a low thing and a depraved taste in any finch ! I bought that goldfinch for money. He was sent home, and hung upon a nail over against my table. He lived outside a counterfeit dwelling-house, supposed (as I argued) to be a dyer's ; otherwise it would have been impossible to account for his perch sticking out of the garret

window. From the time of his appearance in my room, either he left off being thirsty—which was not in the bond—or he could not make up his mind to hear his little bucket drop back into his well when he let it go : a shock which in the best of times had made him tremble. He drew no water but by stealth, and under the cloak of night. After an interval of futile and at length hopeless expectation, the merchant who had educated him was appealed to. The merchant was a bow-legged character, with a flat and cushiony nose, like the last new strawberry. He wore a fur cap and shorts, and was of the velveteen race, velveteeny. He sent word that he would “look round.” He looked round, appeared in the doorway of the room, and slightly cocked up his evil eye at the goldfinch. Instantly a raging thirst beset that bird ; when it was appeased, he still drew several unnecessary buckets of water ; and finally leaped about his perch, and sharpened his bill, as if he had been to the nearest wine-vaults and got drunk.

Donkeys, again. I know shy neighbourhoods where the donkey goes in at the street door, and appears to live upstairs, for I have examined the back yard from over the palings, and have been unable to make him out. Gentility, nobility, Royalty, would appeal to that donkey in vain to do what he does for the costermonger. Feed him with oats at the highest price, put an infant prince and princess in a pair of panniers on his back, adjust his delicate trappings to a nicety, take him to the softest slopes at Windsor, and try what pace you can get out of him. Then, starve him, harness him anyhow to a truck with a flat tray on it, and see him bowl from Whitechapel to Bayswater. There appears to be no particular private understanding between birds and donkeys in a state of nature ; but in the shy neighbourhood state, you shall see them always in the same hands, and always developing the very best energies for the very worst company. I have

known a donkey—by sight ; we were not on speaking terms—who lived over on the Surrey side of London Bridge, among the fastnesses of Jacob's Island and Dockhead. It was the habit of that animal, when his services were not in immediate requisition, to go out alone, idling. I have met him a mile from his place of residence, loitering about the streets ; and the expression of his countenance at such times was most degraded. He was attached to the establishment of an elderly lady who sold periwinkles, and he used to stand on Saturday nights with a cartful of those delicacies outside a gin-shop, pricking up his ears when a customer came to the cart, and too evidently deriving satisfaction from the knowledge that they got bad measure. His mistress was sometimes overtaken by inebriety. The last time I ever saw him (about five years ago) he was in circumstances of difficulty, caused by this failing. Having been left alone with the cart of periwinkles, and forgotten, he went off idling. He prowled among his usual low haunts for some time, gratifying his depraved tastes, until, not taking the cart into his calculations, he endeavoured to turn up a narrow alley, and became greatly involved. He was taken into custody by the police, and the Green Yard of the district being near at hand, was backed into that place of durance. At that crisis I encountered him , the stubborn sense he evinced of being—not to compromise the expression—a blackguard, I never saw exceeded in the human subject. A flaring candle, in a paper shade, stuck in among his periwinkles, showed him, with his ragged harness broken, and his cart extensively shattered, twitching his mouth and shaking his hanging head, a picture of disgrace and obduracy. I have seen boys being taken to station-houses, who were as like him as his own brother.

The dogs of shy neighbourhoods I observe to avoid play, and to be conscious of poverty. They avoid

work, too, if they can, of course ; that is in the nature of all animals.

In a shy street, behind Long Acre, two honest dogs live, who perform in Punch's shows. I may venture to say that I am on terms of intimacy with both, and that I never saw either guilty of the falsehood of failing to look down at the man inside the show during the whole performance. The difficulty other dogs have in satisfying their minds about these dogs appears to be never overcome by time. The same dogs must encounter them over and over again, as they trudge along in their off-minutes behind the legs of the show and beside the drum ; but all dogs seem to suspect their frills and jackets, and to sniff at them as if they thought those articles of personal adornment an eruption—a something in the nature of mange, perhaps. From this Covent Garden of mine I noticed a country dog, only the other day, who had come up to Covent Garden Market under a cart, and had broken his cord, an end of which he still trailed along with him. He loitered about the corners of the four streets commanded by my window ; and bad London dogs came up, and told him lies that he didn't believe ; and worse London dogs came up, and made proposals to him to go and steal in the market, which his principles rejected ; and the ways of the town confused him, and he crept aside and lay down in a doorway. He had scarcely got a wink of sleep, when up comes Punch with Toby. He was darting to Toby for consolation and advice, when he saw the frill, and stopped, in the middle of the street, appalled. The show was pitched, Toby retired behind the drapery, the audience formed, the drum and pipes struck up. My country dog remained immovable, intently staring at these strange appearances, until Toby opened the drama by appearing on his ledge, and to him entered Punch, who put a tobacco-pipe into Toby's mouth. At this spectacle the country dog



threw up his head, gave one terrible howl, and fled due west.

## David Copperfield in Yarmouth

(CHARLES DICKENS)

THE carrier's horse was the laziest horse in the world, I should hope, and shuffled along with his head down, as if he liked to keep people waiting to whom the packages were directed. I fancied, indeed, that he sometimes chuckled audibly over this reflection, but the carrier said he was only troubled with a cough.

The carrier had a way of keeping his head down, like his horse, and of drooping sleepily forward as he drove, with one of his arms on each of his knees. I say "drove," but it struck me that the cart would have gone to Yarmouth quite as well without him, for the horse did all that ; and as to conversation, he had no idea of it but whistling.

Peggotty had a basket of refreshments on her knee, which would have lasted us out handsomely, if we had been going to London by the same conveyance. We ate a good deal, and slept a good deal. Peggotty always went to sleep with her chin upon the handle of the basket, her hold of which never relaxed ; and I could not have believed, unless I had heard her do it, that one defenceless woman could have snored so much.

We made so many deviations up and down lanes, and were such a long time delivering a bedstead at a public-house, and calling at other places, that I was quite tired, and very glad, when we saw Yarmouth. It looked rather spongy and soppy I thought, as I carried my eye over the great dull waste that lay across the river ; and I could not help wondering, if the world were really as round as my geography book

said, how any part of it came to be so flat. But I reflected that Yarmouth might be situated at one of the poles ; which would account for it.

As we drew a little nearer, and saw the whole adjacent prospect lying a straight low line under the sky, I hinted to Peggotty that a mound or so might have improved it ; and also that if the land had been a little more separated from the sea, and the town and the tide had not been quite so mixed up, like toast and water, it would have been nicer. But Peggotty said, with greater emphasis than usual, that we must take things as we found them, and that, for her part, she was proud to call herself a Yarmouth bloater.

When we got into the street (which was strange enough to me), and smelt the fish, and pitch, and oakum, and tar, and saw the sailors walking about, and the carts jangling up and down over the stones, I felt I had done so busy a place an injustice ; and said as much to Peggotty, who heard my expressions of delight with great complacency, and told me it was well known (I suppose to those who had the good fortune to be born Bloaters) that Yarmouth was, upon the whole, the finest place in the universe.

## Our Eye-witness at Gloucester

[*Election Inquiry*, 1859]

(CHARLES DICKENS)

TRULY Gloucester is a wonderful and misleading city, a city which you walk about and examine carefully, and dispose of in your own mind as a combination of an ordinary agricultural capital, and a cathedral town, till you happen to see a man in complete maritime costume turning down an obscure lane which apparently ends in the county gaol. You follow this mari-

ner, saying to yourself, " And why a sou'-wester hat, why a blue flannel Jersey, why those canvas trousers in Gloucester ? " Why ? Follow the man but a little further and you will see. You will see, suddenly appearing as in a dream, long ranges of warehouses with cranes attached, endless intricacies of docks, miles of tram-road, wildernesses of timber in stacks, and huge three-masted ships wedged into little canals, floating through flood-gates with no apparent means of propulsion, and without a sail to bless themselves with. And it is this extraordinary inland port which you had disposed of so easily as a quiet cathedral town.

## The Great Commoner at Bath

(WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY)

[William Makepeace Thackeray was born at Calcutta in 1811. He was educated at the Charterhouse (for which he had no great love) and Cambridge. He studied art, but all his instincts led him towards literature. The first of his great novels, *Vanity Fair*, was published in 1847, and was the forerunner of other brilliant pictures of English society in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The first extract given below is from *The Four Georges*, and the second from *Esmond*.]

A HUNDRED and twenty years ago there were not only country towns in England, but people who inhabited them. We were very much more gregarious ; we were amused by very simple pleasures. Every town had its fair, every village its wake. The old poets have sung a hundred jolly ditties about great cudgel-playings, famous grinning through horse-collars, great maypole meetings, and morris dances. . . .

Every county town had its assembly-room—mouldy old tenements, which we may still see in deserted inn-yards, in decayed provincial cities, out of which the

great wen of London has sucked all the life. York, at assize times, and throughout the winter, harboured a large society of northern gentry. Shrewsbury was celebrated for its festivities. At Newmarket, I read of "a vast deal of good company, besides rogues and blacklegs"; at Norwich, of two assemblies, with a prodigious crowd in the hall, the rooms, and the gallery. . . .

As for Bath, all history went and bathed and drank there. George II. and his Queen, Prince Frederick and his Court, scarce a character one can mention of the early last century but was seen in that famous Pump Room where Beau Nash presided, and his picture hung between the busts of Newton and Pope—

" This picture, placed these busts between,  
Gives Satire all its strength ,  
Wisdom and Wit are little seen,  
But Folly at full length "

I should like to have seen the Folly. It was a splendid, embroidered, beruffled, snuff-boxed, red-heeled, impertinent Folly, and knew how to make itself respected. I should like to have seen that noble old madcap Peterborough in his boots (he actually had the audacity to walk about Bath in boots !) with his blue ribbon and stars, and a cabbage under each arm, and a chicken in his hand, which he had been cheapening for his dinner. Chesterfield came there many a time and gambled for hundreds, and grinned through his gout. Mary Wortley was there, young and beautiful; and Mary Wortley, old, hideous, and snuffy. Miss Chudleigh came there, slipping away from one husband, and on the look-out for another. Walpole passed many a day there; sickly, supercilious, absurdly dandified and affected; with a brilliant wit, a delightful sensibility; and for his friends, a most tender, generous, and faithful heart. And if you and I had been alive then, and strolling down Milsom Street—hush !

we should have taken our hats off, as an awful, long, lean, gaunt figure, swathed in flannels, passed by in its chair, and a livid face looked out from the window—great fierce eyes staring from under a bushy powdered wig, a terrible frown, a terrible Roman nose—and we whisper to one another, “There he is! There’s the great commoner! There is Mr. Pitt!” As we walk away, the abbey bells are set a-ringing; and we meet our testy friend Toby Smollett, on the arm of James Quin the actor, who tells us that the bells ring for Mr. Bullock, an eminent cow-keeper from Tottenham, who has just arrived to drink the waters, and Toby shakes his cane at the door of Colonel Ringworm—the Creole gentleman’s lodgings next his own—where the colonel’s two negroes are practising on the French horn.

## Dick Steele and Joseph Addison

(WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY)

QUITTING the Guard-table one Sunday afternoon, when by chance Dick had a sober fit on him, he and his friend were making their way down Germain Street, and Dick all of a sudden left his companion’s arm, and ran after a gentleman who was poring over a folio volume at the bookshop near to St. James’s Church. He was a fair, tall man, in a snuff-coloured suit, with a plain sword, very sober, and almost shabby in appearance—at least when compared to Captain Steele, who loved to adorn his jolly round person with the finest of clothes, and shone in scarlet and gold lace. The Captain rushed up, then, to the student of the bookstall, took him in his arms, and would have kissed him—for Dick was always hugging and bussing his friends—but the other stepped back with a flush on his pale face, seeming to decline this public manifestation of Steele’s regard.

"My dearest Joe, where hast thou hidden thyself this age?" cries the Captain, still holding both his friend's hands; "I have been languishing for thee this fortnight."

"A fortnight is not an age, Dick," says the other, very good-humouredly. (He had light blue eyes, extraordinary bright, and a face perfectly regular and handsome, like a tinted statue.) "And I have been hiding myself—where do you think?"

"What! not across the water, my dear Joe?" says Steele, with a look of great alarm; "thou knowest I have always——"

"No," says his friend, interrupting him with a smile; "we are not come to such straits as that, Dick. I have been hiding, sir, at a place where people never think of finding you—at my own lodgings, whither I am going to smoke a pipe now and drink a glass of sack will your honour come?"

## "Bideford in Devon"

(CHARLES KINGSLEY)

[In the first of these spirited extracts from *Westward Ho!* Charles Kingsley (1819–75) reminds us that a town which is insignificant to-day may yet claim a glorious past. The second extract is a part of his vivid picture of a pageant such as Elizabethan citizens delighted to perform or to witness.]

ALL who have travelled through the delicious scenery of North Devon must needs know the little white town of Bideford, which slopes upward from its broad tide-river paved with yellow sands, and many-arched old bridge where salmon wait for Autumn floods, toward the pleasant upland on the west. Above the town the hills close in, cushioned with deep oak woods, through

which juts here and there a crag of fern-fringed slate ; below they lower, and open more and more in softly-rounded knolls, and fertile squares of red and green, till they sink into the wide expanse of hazy flats, rich salt-marshes, and rolling sandhills, where Torridge joins her sister Taw, and both together flow quietly toward the broad surges of the bar, and the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell. Pleasantly the old town stands there, beneath its soft Italian sky, fanned day and night by the fresh ocean breeze, which forbids alike the keen winter frosts, and the fierce thunder heats of the midland ; and pleasantly it has stood there for now, perhaps, eight hundred years since the first Grenville, cousin of the Conqueror, returning from the conquest of South Wales, drew round him trusty Saxon serfs, and free Norse rovers with their golden curls, and dark Silurian Britons from the Swansea shore, and all the mingled blood which still gives to the seaward folk of the next county their strength and intellect, and, even in these levelling days, their peculiar beauty of face and form.

But at the time whereof I write, Bideford was not merely a pleasant country town, whose quay was haunted by a few coasting craft. It was one of the chief ports of England ; it furnished seven ships to fight the Armada : even more than a century afterwards, say the chroniclers, " it sent more vessels to the northern trade than any port in England, saving (strange juxtaposition !) London and Topsham," and was the centre of a local civilization and enterprise, small perhaps compared with the vast efforts of the present day : but who dare despise the day of small things, if it has proved to be the dawn of mighty ones ? And it is to the sea-life and labour of Bideford, and Dartmouth and Topsham, and Plymouth (then a petty place), and many another little western town, that England owes the foundation of her naval and commercial glory. It was the men of Devon, the Drakes

and Hawkinses, Gilberts and Raleighs, Grenvilles and Oxenhams, and a host more of "forgotten worthies," whom we shall learn one day to honour as they deserve, to whom she owes her commerce, her colonies, her very existence.

## Bideford welcomes the Returned Mariners

(CHARLES KINGSLEY)

FIVE years are past and gone. It is nine of the clock on a still, bright November morning ; but the bells of Bideford church are still ringing for the daily service two hours after the usual time ; and instead of going soberly according to wont, cannot help breaking forth every five minutes into a jocund peal, and tumbling head over heels in ecstasies of joy. Bideford streets are a very flower-garden of all the colours, swarming with sea-men and burghers, and burghers' wives and daughters, all in their holiday attire. Garlands are hung across the streets, and tapestries from every window. The ships in the pool are dressed in all their flags, and give tumultuous vent to their feelings by peals of ordnance of every size. Every stable is crammed with horses ; and Sir Richard Grenville's house is like a very tavern, with eating and drinking, and unsaddling, and running to and fro of grooms and serving-men. Along the little churchyard, packed full with women, streams all the gentle blood of North Devon,—tall and stately men, and fair ladies, worthy of the days when the gentry of England were by due right the leaders of the people, by personal prowess and beauty, as well as by intellect and education. And first, there is my lady Countess of Bath, whom Sir Richard Grenville is escorting, cap in hand (for her good Earl Bouchier is in London with the queen) ; and there are Bassets from beautiful UMBERLEIGH, and



Carys from more beautiful Clovelly, and Fortescues of Wear, and Fortescues of Buckland, and Fortescues from all quarters, and Coles from Slade, and Stukelys from Affton, and St. Legers from Annery, and Coffins from Portledge, and even Coplestones from Eggesford, thirty miles away ; and last, but not least (for almost all stop to give them place), Sir John Chichester of Raleigh, followed in single file, after the good old patriarchal fashion, by his eight daughters, and three of his five famous sons, (one, to avenge his murdered brother, is fighting valiantly in Ireland, hereafter to rule there wisely also, as Lord Deputy and Baron of Belfast) ; and he meets at the gate his cousin of Arlington, and behind him a train of four daughters and nineteen sons, the last of whom has not yet passed the Town-hall, while the first is at the Lychgate, who, laughing, make way for the elder though shorter branch of that most fruitful tree ; and so on into the church, where all are placed according to their degrees, or at least as near as may be, not without a few sour looks, and shovings, and whisperings, from one high-born matron and another ; till the churchwardens and sidesmen, who never had before so goodly a company to arrange, have bustled themselves hot, and red, and frantic, and end by imploring abjectly the help of the great Sir Richard himself to tell them who everybody is, and which is the elder branch, and which is the younger, and who carries eight quarterings in their arms, and who only four, and so prevent their setting at deadly feud half the fine ladies of North Devon ; for the old men are all safe packed away in the corporation pews, and the young ones care only to get a place whence they may eye the ladies. And at last there is a silence, and a looking toward the door, and then distant music, flutes and hautboys, drums and trumpets, which come braying, and screaming, and thundering merrily up to the very church doors, and then cease ; and the churchwardens and sidesmen bustle down to

## THE TOWN IN LITERATURE

the entrance, rods in hand, and there is a general whisper and rustle, not without glad tears and blessings from many a woman, and from some men also, as the wonder of the day enters, and the rector begins, not the morning service, but the good old thanksgiving after a victory at sea.

And what is it which has thus sent old Bideford wild with that "goodly joy and pious mirth," of which we now only retain traditions in our translation of the Psalms? Why are all eyes fixed, with greedy admiration, on those four weather-beaten mariners, decked out with knots and ribbons by loving hands; and yet more on that gigantic figure who walks before them, a beardless boy, and yet with the frame and stature of a Hercules, towering, like Saul of old, a head and shoulders above all the congregation, with his golden locks flowing down over his shoulders? And why, as the five go instinctively up to the altar, and there fall on their knees before the rails, are all eyes turned to the pew where Mrs. Leigh of Burrough has hid her face between her hands, and her hood rustles and shakes to her joyful sobs? Because there was fellow-feeling of old in merry England, in county and in town; and these are Devon men, and men of Bideford, whose names are Amyas Leigh of Burrough, John Staveley, Michael Heard, and Jonas Marshall of Bideford, and Thomas Braund of Clovelly: and they, the first of all English mariners, have sailed round the world with Francis Drake, and are come hither to give God thanks.

So first, preceded by the waits, came along the bridge toward the Town-hall, a device prepared by the good rector, who, standing by, acted as showman, and explained anxiously to the bystanders the import of a certain "allegory," wherein on a great banner was depicted Queen Elizabeth herself, who, in ample ruff and farthingale, a Bible in one hand, and a sword in the other, stood triumphant. Whereupon, up came

a fresh member of the procession ; namely no less a person than Vindex Brindlecombe, the ancient school-master, with five-and-forty boys at his heels, who halting, pulled out his spectacles, and thus signified his forgiveness of his whilome broken head.—

“ That the world should have been circumnavigated, ladies and gentles, were matter enough of jubilation to the student of Herodotus and Plato, Plinius and—ahem ! much more when the circumnavigators are Britons ; more, again, when Damnonians ”

“ Don’t swear, master,” said young Will Cary.

“ Gulhelme Cary, Gulhelme Cary, hast thou forgotten thy——”

“ Whippings ? Never, old lad ! Go on ; but let not the licence of the scholar overtop the modesty of the Christian.”

“ More again, as I said, when, *incolæ*, inhabitants of Devon , but, most of all, men of Bideford school. Oh renowned school ! Oh schoolboys ennobled by fellowship with him ! Oh most happy pedagogue, to whom it has befallen to have chastised a circumnavigator, and, like another Chiron, trained another Hercules . yet more than Hercules, for he placed his pillars on the ocean shore, and then returned , but my scholar’s voyage——”

“ Hark how the old fox is praising himself on the sly,” said Cary

“ Mr William, Mr William, peace ;—*silentium*, my graceless pupil Urge the foaming steed, and strike terror into the rapid stag, but meddle not with matters too high for thee ”

“ He has given you ~~the~~ dor now, sir,” said Lady Bath ; “ let the old man say his say.”

“ Famed Argo ship, that noble chip, by doughty Jason’s steering,  
Brought back to Greece the golden fleece, from Colchis home careering ,

But now her fame is put to shame, while new Devonian  
 Argo  
 Round earth doth run in wake of sun, and brings a  
 wealthier cargo."

"Runs with a right fal-la-la," observed Cary; "and would go nobly to a fiddle and a big drum."

"Ye Spaniards, quake! our doughty Drake a royal swan  
 is tested,  
 On wing and oar, from shore to shore, the raging main  
 who breasted;  
 But never needs to chant his deeds, like swan that lies  
 a-dying,  
 So far his name, by trump of fame, around the sphere is  
 flying."

"Hillo ho! schoolmaster!" shouted a voice from behind; "move on, and make way for Father Neptune!" Whereon a whole storm of raillery fell upon the hapless pedagogue.

"We waited for the parson's alligator, but we wain't for your'n."

"Allegory! my children, allegory!" shrieked the man of letters.

"What do ye call he an alligator for? He is but a poor little starved evat!"

"Out of the road, Old Custis! March on, Don Palmado!"

These allusions to the usual instrument of torture in west country schools made the old gentleman wince; especially when they were followed home by—

"Who stole Admiral Grenville's brooms, because birch rods were dear?"

But proudly he shook his bald head, as a bull shakes off the flies, and returned to the charge once more.

“ Great Alexander, famed commander, wept and made a  
pothor,  
At conquering only half the world, but Drake had  
conquer’d t’other,  
And Hercules to brink of seas——”

“ Oh !——”

And clapping both hands to the back of his neck, the schoolmaster began dancing frantically about, while his boys broke out tittering, “ O ! the ochidore ! look to the blue ochidore ! Who’ve put ochidore to maister’s poll ! ”

It was too true : neatly inserted, as he stooped forward, between his neck and his collar, was a large live shore-crab, holding on tight with both hands.

“ Gentles ! good Christians ! save me ! I am mare-rode ! *Incubo, vel ab incubo, opprimor !* Satanas has me by the poll ! Help ! he tears my jugular, he wrings my neck, as he does to Dr. Faustus in the play. *Confiteor !*—I confess ! Satan, I defy thee ! Good people, I confess ! The truth will out. Mr. Francis Leigh wrote the epigram ! ” And diving through the crowd, the pedagogue vanished howling, while Father Neptune, crowned with sea-weeds, a trident in one hand, and a live dog-fish in the other, swaggered up the street surrounded by a tall bodyguard of mariners, and followed by a great banner, on which was depicted a globe, with Drake’s ship thereon upside down, and overwritten,—

“ See every man the *Pelican*,  
Which round the world did go,  
While her stern-post was uppermost,  
And topmasts down below.  
And by the way she lost a day,  
Out of her log was stole :  
But Neptune kind, with favouring wind,  
Hath brought her safe and whole.”

"Now, lads!" cried Neptune; "hand me my parable that's writ for me, and here goeth!" And at the top of his bull-voice he began roaring,—

"I am King Neptune bold,  
The ruler of the seas,  
I don't understand much singing on land,  
But I hope what I say will please.

Here be five Bideford men,  
Which have sail'd the world around,  
And I watch'd them well, as they all can tell,  
And brought them home safe and sound

For the sea my realm it is,  
As good Queen Bess's is the land,  
So freely come again, all merry Devon men,  
And there's old Neptune's hand"

"Holla, boys! holla! Blow up, Triton, and bring forward the freedom of the seas"

Triton, roaring through a conch, brought forward a cockle-shell full of salt-water, and delivered it solemnly to Amyas, who, of course, put a noble into it, and returned it after Grenville had done the same.

"Holla, Dick Admiral!" cried Neptune, who was pretty far gone in liquor; "we knew thou hadst a right English heart in thee, for all thou standest there as taut as a Don who has swallowed his rapier."

"Gramercy, stop thy bellowing, fellow, and on; for thou smellest vilely of fish."

"Everything smells sweet in its right place. I'm going home."

"I thought thou wert there all along, being already half-seas over," said Cary.

"Ay, right Upsee-Dutch; and that's more than thou ever wilt be, thou 'long-shore stay-at-home. Why wast making sheep's eyes at Mistress Salterne here, while my pretty little chuck of Burrough there was playing at shove-groat with Spanish doubloons?"

“Go to the devil, sirrah!” said Cary. Neptune had touched on a sore subject; and more cheeks than Amyas Leigh’s reddened at the hint.

“Amen, if Heaven so please!” and on rolled the monarch of the seas; and so the pageant ended.

## Tom Brown’s Arrival at Rugby

(THOMAS HUGHES)

[The passage below is from *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, probably the most famous school story ever written. The author, Thomas Hughes, was a County Court Judge, and an ardent social worker]

“AND so here’s Rugby, sir, at last, and you’ll be in plenty of time for dinner at the School-house, as I telled you,” said the old guard, pulling his horn out of its case and tootle-tooing away, while the coachman shook up his horses, and carried them along the side of the school close, round Dead-man’s corner, past the school-gates, and down the High Street to the Spread Eagle, the wheelers in a spanking trot, and leaders cantering, in a style which would not have disgraced “Cherry Bob,” “ramping, stamping, tearing, swearing Billy Harwood,” or any other of the old coaching heroes.

Tom’s heart beat quick as he passed the great school-field or close, with its noble elms, in which several games at football were going on, and tried to take in at once the long line of grey buildings, beginning with the chapel, and ending with the School-house, the residence of the head-master, where the great flag was lazily waving from the highest round tower. And he began already to be proud of being a Rugby boy, as he passed the school-gates, with the oriel window above, and saw the boys standing there, looking as if the town belonged to them, and nodding

in a familiar manner to the coachman, as if any one of them would be quite equal to getting on the box, and working the team down street as well as he.

One of the young heroes, however, ran out from the rest, and scrambled up behind ; where, having righted himself, and nodded to the guard, with " How do, Jem ? " he turned short round to Tom, and after looking him over for a minute, began,—

" I say, you fellow, is your name Brown ? "

" Yes," said Tom, in considerable astonishment, glad, however, to have lighted on some one already who seemed to know him.

## Tewkesbury—Phineas Fletcher meets John Halifax

(DINAH MARIA (MULOCK) CRAIK)

[*John Halifax, Gentleman*, from which these extracts are taken, was first published in 1856 Its setting is that part of Gloucestershire lying between Tewkesbury (the Norton Bury of the story) and Amberley Common (called Enderley Flats) Miss Mulock designed the book when staying in the neighbourhood of Stroud in 1853, and after her death a committee, including Tennyson, Browning, Matthew Arnold, Huxley, Leighton, and Millais, chose Tewkesbury Abbey as the site for the marble tablet erected to her memory ]

THUS he stood, principal figure in a picture which is even yet as clear to me as yesterday—the narrow, dirty alley leading out of the High Street, yet showing a glimmer of green field at the further end ; the open house-doors on either side, through which came the drowsy burr of many a stocking-loom, the prattle of children paddling in the gutter, and sailing thereon a fleet of potato parings. In front the High Street, with the mayor's house opposite, porticoed and grand ; and



beyond, just where the rain-clouds were breaking, rose up out of a nest of trees the square tower of our ancient Abbey—Norton Bury's boast and pride. On it, from a break in the clouds, came a sudden stream of light. The stranger-lad lifted up his head to look at it.

"The rain will be over soon," I said, but doubted if he heard me. What could he be thinking of so intently?—a poor working lad, whom few would have given credit for thinking at all.

I do not suppose my father cast a second glance or thought on the boy, whom, from a sense of common justice, he had made take shelter beside us. In truth, worthy man, he had no lack of matter to occupy his mind, being sole architect of a long up-hill but now thriving trade. I saw, by the hardening of his features, and the restless way in which he poked his stick into the little water-pools, that he was longing to be in his tan-yard close by.

He pulled out his great silver watch—the dread of our house, for it was a watch which seemed to imbibe something of its master's character; remorseless as justice or fate, it never erred a moment.

"Twenty-three minutes lost by this shower Phineas, my son . . . I must find some one to go home with thee." . . .

"Father!" I whispered. But here the boy had mustered up his courage and voice.

"Sir, I want work; may I earn a penny?"

. . . . .

"Please to take me to that clematis arbour; it looks over the Avon. Now, how do you like our garden?" . . .

At the end of the arbour the wall which enclosed us on the riverward side was cut down—my father had done it at my asking—so as to make a seat, something after the fashion of Queen Mary's seat at Stirling, of which I had read. Thence, one could see a goodly

sweep of country. First, close below, flowed the Avon — Shakespeare's Avon — here a narrow, sluggish stream, but capable, as we at Norton Bury sometimes knew to our cost, of being roused into fierceness and foam. Now it slipped on quietly enough, contenting itself with turning a flour-mill hard by, the lazy whirr of which made a sleepy, incessant monotone which I was fond of hearing.

From the opposite bank stretched a wide green level, called the Ham—dotted with pasturing cattle of all sorts. Beyond it was a second river, forming an arch of a circle round the verdant flat. But the stream itself lay so low as to be invisible from where we sat ; you could only trace the line of its course by the small white sails that glided in and out, oddly enough, from behind clumps of trees, and across meadow-lands

They attracted John's attention “ Those can't be boats, surely Is there water there ? ”

“ To be sure, or you would not see the sails It is the Severn, though at this distance you can't perceive it ; yet it is deep enough too, as you may see by the boats it carries. You would hardly believe so, to look at it here—but I believe it gets broader and broader, and turns out a noble river by the time it reaches the King's Roads, and forms the Bristol Channel ”

“ I've seen that ! ” cried John, with a bright look. “ Ah ! I like the Severn ”

He stood gazing at it a good while, a new expression dawning in his eyes. Eyes in which then, for the first time, I watched a thought grow, and grow, till out of them was shining a beauty absolutely divine.

All of a sudden the Abbey chimes burst out, and made the lad start. “ What's that ? ”

“ Turn again, Whittington, Lord Mayor of London,” I sang to the bells.

## Mrs. Siddons at Cheltenham ("Coltham")

(DINAH MARIA (MULOCK) CRAIK)

NEAR as we lived to Coltham, I had only been there once in my life, but John Halifax knew the town pretty well, having latterly in addition to his clerkship been employed by my father in going about the neighbourhood buying bark. I was amused when the coach stopped at an inn, which bore the ominous sign of the "Fleece," to see how well accustomed he seemed to be to the ways of the place. He departed himself with perfect self-possession; the waiter served him respectfully. He had evidently taken his position in the world—at least, our little world—he was no longer a boy, but a man. I was glad to see it; leaving everything in his hands, I lay down where he placed me in the inn parlour, and watched him giving his orders and walking about. Sometimes I thought his eyes were restless and unquiet, but his manner was as composed as usual.

Mr. Charles had left us, appointing a meeting at Coffee-house Yard, where the theatre then was.

"A poor barn-like place, I believe," said John, stopping in his walk up and down the room to place my cushions more easy, "they should build a new one now Coltham is growing up into such a fashionable town. I wish I could take you to see the 'Well-walk,' with all the fine people promenading. But you must rest, Phineas."

I consented, being indeed rather weary.

"You will like to see Mrs. Siddons, whom we have so often talked about? She is not young now, Mr. Charles says, but magnificent still. She first came out in the same theatre more than twenty years ago. Yates saw her. I wonder, Phineas, if your father ever did."

from his thankfulness—and she turned to John Halifax.

“I regret, young man, that you should have had so much trouble. Here is some requital.”

He took the money, selected from it one silver coin, and returned the rest

“I will keep this, madam, if you please, as a memento that I once had the honour of being useful to Mrs Siddons.”

She looked at him keenly, out of her wonderful dark eyes, then curtsied with grave dignity—“I thank you, sir,” she said, and passed on.

A few minutes after some underling of the theatre found us out and brought us, “by Mrs. Siddons’s desire,” to the best places the house could afford.

It was a glorious night. At this distance of time, when I look back upon it my old blood leaps and burns. I repeat, it was a glorious night!

Before the curtain rose we had time to glance about us on that scene, to both entirely new—the inside of a theatre. Shabby and small as the place was, it was filled with all the *beau monde* of Coltham, which then, patronized by royalty, rivalled even Bath in its fashion and folly. Such a dazzle of diamonds and spangled turbans and Prince of Wales’s plumes. Such an odd mingling of costume, which was then in a transition state, the old ladies clinging tenaciously to the stately silken petticoats and long bodices, surmounted by the prim and decent *bouffantes*, while the younger belles had begun to flaunt in the French fashions of flimsy muslins, short-waisted—narrow-skirted. . . .

But—the play began.

I am not going to follow it : all the world has heard of the *Lady Macbeth* of Mrs. Siddon. This, the first and last play I ever witnessed, stands out to my memory, after more than half a century, as clear as on that night. Still I can see her in her first scene,

“reading a letter”—that wondrous woman, who, in spite of her modern black velvet and point lace, did not act, but *was*, Lady Macbeth: still I hear the awe-struck, questioning, weird-like tone, that sent an involuntary shudder through the house, as if supernatural things were abroad—“*They made themselves—aw!*” And still there quivers through the silence that piteous cry of a strong heart broken—“*All the perfumes of Arabia will never sweeten this little hand!*”

Well, she is gone, like the brief three hours when we hung on her every breath, as if it could stay even the wheels of time. But they have whirled on—whirled her away with them into the infinite, and into earthly oblivion! People tell me that a new generation only smiles at the traditional glory of Sarah Siddons. They never saw her. For me, I shall go down to the grave worshipping her still.

## Thames

(ISA (CRAIG) KNOX)

[Mrs Knox, whose maiden name was Isa Craig, was born in Edinburgh in 1831. While working there as a sempstress she contributed poems and reviews to the *Scotsman*. She came to London in 1857, wrote for *Good Words*, and acted for a time as editor of the *Argosy*. Her best-known novel is *Esther West*. She wrote also for children her *Little Folks' History of England* and *Tales on the Parables*. Her poems are characterized by strikingly picturesque touches. She died in 1903.]

A GLIMPSE of the river 't it glooms  
Underneath the black arches,  
Across it the broad shadow looms,  
And the eager crowd marches;  
Where, washing the feet of the city,  
Strong and swift it is flowing;

On its bosom the ships of the nations  
Are coming and going ;  
Heavy laden it labours and spends,  
In a great strain of duty,  
The power that was gathered and nursed  
In the calm and the beauty.  
Like thee, noble river, like thee,  
Let our lives in beginning and ending,  
Fair in their gathering be,  
And great in the time of their spending.

## An Election at Dewsbury

(ALFRED AUSTIN)

[Alfred Austin (1835-1913), journalist, critic, and poet, became Poet Laureate in 1896 His *Autobiography*, from which the following extract is taken, is an eminently readable work ]

My wife accompanied me to Dewsbury, where we found ourselves the guests of the kindest, simplest, and most primitive Yorkshire manufacturing folk imaginable. They spoke with the broadest West Riding pronunciation imaginable, recalling to me the speech of working-folk familiar to me in boyhood. To my wife it was an entirely new experience, but one she heartily enjoyed, from their being free from all pretence, and imbued with whole-heartedness and a touching pride in a candidate who, with southern manners and speech, understood them, their dialect, and their rough, broad pronunciation. They dined in the middle of the day, and gave us of their best, and tried to find out what we needed and desired.

Walking through the town with our hosts shortly after my arrival, I was made acquainted with any well-known Conservative voter we met ; and one of

these, with north-country frankness, said to me, "Eh, but you're a very little un." "You wait," I replied, "till you see my wife;" and the answer quickly went the round of the place, and satisfied them that I should be justified in saying, "I'se Yorkshire, too," and not easily disconcerted.

A meeting had been arranged for the following evening, to be held in the largest warehouse of the town, and admission was to be open to all. Mr. Rowland Winn, afterwards Lord St Oswald, then one of the whips of the party, and whose place, Nostell Priory, was only a few miles distant, took the chair; and at eight o'clock I found myself on a well-raised platform, and in presence of some three thousand persons, two-thirds of whom, I was told, were out-and-out Radicals. When, after a few words from the chairman, I rose, I was greeted with adverse shouts that completely drowned the cheers of my supporters. I made no attempt to speak, but stood quietly facing the storm till, for an instant, it subsided. "One moment," I said, as quickly as possible, "you are three thousand, and I am one. It is plain, therefore, you can silence me, if you like. But"—and I stretched out my right hand towards them, appealing to their generosity—"will you?" There was a burst of cheering from them all, and they heard me from first to last without any further hostile interruption. At the end of the meeting, several of them came to me and said, "We enjoyed your speech, and we're very sorry, but we can't vote for you." They were Gladstonians to a man.

It was uphill, and I soon saw, futile work; but, as a matter of course, I went through it with a good face, and hopeful look, to the last. Easter intervened, and gave candidates throughout the country a respite from their haranguing. We sought our retirement at Ullswater, whose beauty and peacefulness soon restored me to true self-consciousness; and contrasting

these with electioneering noise, and the rapid speeches of the past few days, I said to myself, "What a fool you are!"

## Portsmouth Harbour

(WALTER BESANT)

[Sir Walter Besant was born at Portsmouth in 1836. He became, in 1868, the Secretary of the Palestine Exploration Fund, but was already engaged in literary work. From 1872 until 1882 he wrote, in conjunction with James Rice, many successful novels; and after the death of his friend continued to produce novels equally well written, but less skilfully constructed. He displayed much interest in the history of London, and projected a great work on this subject which was never finished, though he published volumes on Westminster, South London, and so on. The extract that follows is from *By Celia's Arbour*, a pleasant story with Portsmouth, his native town, as its background.]

Two boys and a girl, standing together in the north-west corner of the Queen's Bastion on the old town wall.

We were standing in the spot where the grass was longest and greenest, the wild convolvulus most abundant, and where the noblest of the great elms which stood upon the ramparts—"to catch the enemy's shells," said Leonard—threw out a gracious arm laden with leafy foliage to give a shade. We called the place Celia's Arbour.

If you looked out over the parapet, you saw before you the whole of the most magnificent harbour in the world; and if you looked through the embrasure of the wall, you had a splendid framed picture—water for foreground, old ruined castle in middle distance, blue-hills beyond, and above blue sky.



We were all three silent, because it was Leonard's last evening with us. He was going away, our companion and brother, and we were there to bid him God speed.

It was after eight ; suddenly the sun, which a moment before was a great disc of burnished gold, sank below the thin line of land between sky and sea.

Then the evening gun from the Duke of York's Bastion proclaimed the death of another day with a loud report, which made the branches in the trees above us to shake and tremble. And from the barracks in the town ; from the Harbour Admiral's flagship , from the Port Admiral's flagship ; from the flagship of the Admiral in command of the Mediterranean Fleet, then in harbour ; from the tower of the old church, there came such a firing of muskets, such a beating of drums, playing of fifes, ringing of bells, and sounding of trumpets, that you would have thought the sun was setting once for all, and receiving his farewell salute from a world he was leaving for ever to roll about in darkness.

The evening gun and the *tintamarre* that followed roused us all three, and we involuntarily turned to look across the parapet. Beyond that was the moat, and beyond the moat was a ravelin, and beyond the ravelin the sea-wall ; beyond the wall a smooth and placid lake—for it was high tide—four miles long and a couple of miles wide, in which the splendour of the west was reflected so that it looked like a furnace of molten metal. At low tide it would have been a great flat level of black mud, unlovely even with an evening sky upon it, intersected with creeks and streams which, I suppose, were kept full of water by the drainage of the mud-banks.

At the end of the harbour stood the old ruined castle, on the very margin and verge of the water. The walls were reflected in the calm bosom of the

lagoon ; the water-gate opened out upon wavelets of the lapping tide ; behind rose the great donjon, square, grey, and massive ; in the tourney-yard stood the old church, and we needed no telling to make us think of the walls behind, four feet broad, rugged and worn by the tooth of Time, thickly blossoming with gilly-flowers, clutched and held on all sides by the tight embrace of the ivy. There had been rain in the afternoon, so that the air was clear and transparent, and you could see every stone in the grand old keep, every dentation of the wall.

Behind the castle lay the low curved line of a long hill, green and grassy, which made a background to the harbour and the old fortress. It stretched for six miles, this hill, and might have been monotonous but for the chalk quarries which studded its side with frequent intervals of white. Farther on, to the west, there lay a village, buried in a great clump of trees, so that you could see nothing but the tower of a church and the occasional smoke of a chimney. The village was so far off that it seemed like some outlying fort, an advance work of civilization, an outpost such as those which the Roman conquerors have left in the desert. When your eye left the village among the trees and travelled southwards, you could see very little of land on the other side by reason of the ships that intervened—ships of every age, of every class, of every colour, of every build ; frigates, three-deckers, brigs, schooners, cutters, launches, gunboats, paddle-wheel steamers, screw steamers, hulks so old as to be almost shapeless—they were lying ranged in line, or they were moored separately ; some in the full flood of the waning sunset, some in shadow, one behind the other, making deep blacknesses in the golden water. There was not much life at this late hour in the harbour. Here and there a boat pulled by two or three lads from the town ; here and there a great ship's gig, moving heavily through the water, pulled by a crew of sailors,

rowing with their slow and measured stroke, and the little middy sitting in the stern ; or perhaps a wherry coming down from Fareham Creek. But mostly the harbour was silent, the bustle even at the low end having ceased with the sunset.

In those days the new suburb, which is now a large town, had hardly yet begun ; there was no sea-wall along the beach outside the harbour, and half a mile beyond the rampart you might reach a place perfectly lonely and deserted. There was a common, a strip of waste land where the troops drilled and exercised, and beyond the common an old castle, a square and rather ugly pile built by Henry VIII , when he set up the fortresses of Sandown, Walmer, and Deal. It was surrounded by a star fort, and stood on the very edge of the sea, with a sloping face of stone which ran down to the edge of the water at low tide, and into the waves at high, protecting the moat which surrounded the town. As a boy I regarded this fortress with reverence. There had been a siege there at the time of the Civil War. It was held for the King, but the governor, after a little fighting with his Roundhead besiegers, surrendered the castle, and then the town itself capitulated. One pictured the townsmen on the wall, looking out to see the fortunes of the battle, the men for Church and King side by side with their sour-faced brethren who were for God and country, the discomfiture of the former when the Royal Standard was hauled down, and the joy of the Puritans when their party marched in at the town gates. Of course in my young imagination I supposed that the town walls were just the same then as now, with their bastions, curtains, ravelins, and glacis. It was a lonely place in those days, fit for a dreamy boy or a moody man. Beyond the castle the beach stretched far, far away under a low cliff of red earth, curving round in a graceful line ; behind the beach was a narrow strip of ground covered with patches of furze,

whose yellow and sickly sweet blossoms seemed to flourish independently of all seasons ; on its scanty edge grew sea poppies ; and here, amid the marshy ground which lay about, we used to hunt as boys for vipers, adders, and the little evvet, the alligator of Great Britain, who is as long as a finger and as venomous as a lamb.

## Stratford-upon-Avon

(WILLIAM THRELKELD EDWARDS)

[William Threlkeld Edwards (1838-59), of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was drowned while bathing in the Cam. His father published his poems and essays after his death, under the title of *Papers of an Undergraduate*, 1862. They are little known, but one of the poems is to be found in *A Book of English Verse on Infancy and Childhood* in the Golden Treasury Series.]

### I

METHINKS the Father looks down with a smile  
When earnest souls, in humble pilgrimage,  
Visit the shrines of poet, or of sage,  
Lit by their light, and sacred by their toil ;  
For such come only on an embassy  
To tell God's truth to man. Their souls came forth  
From Him, and are a part of Him ; their worth  
Is praise to Him through each succeeding age ;  
And scarcely could we give Him higher praise  
Than by our praise of one to whom He gave  
Wide mind and tender heart, and sweetest song ;  
Who shrined the highest truth in loftiest lays.—  
Our reverence at his birthplace, home, and grave,  
Is to our God a pæan loud and long.

## II

Uncovered, in our homage to the name  
 Of him whose words have echoed through the earth,  
 And taught it living wisdom ; so we came  
 Into the humble room where he had birth,  
 Where the young being struggled into light,  
 With all its fair remembrance of the skies,—  
 Came like a star to make the dull world bright,  
 And fill the air with spheric harmonies.  
 Hither had pilgrims come from many a land ;  
 Here had come monarch, noble, poet, sage,  
 And left the traces upon every hand  
 Of reverence to this son of every age ;  
 And all the room was hallowed by the trace  
 Of genius ; yea, a glory on the place.

## III

Within this little room he often sat  
 Upon his mother's knee, or by her side ;  
 And sweeter wisdom he had none than that  
 She taught him oft at silent eventide,  
 In the calm dusk. Mothers are very wise  
 In holy instincts, and high sympathies,  
 And quiet duties, virtues all allied  
 To sweet beliefs that in the dear heart rise,  
 And have their source in heaven. And at times  
 The mother may have told her gentle thought  
 To her young son, in simple, tender rhymes.  
 Mother, be glad in thy meek dignity :  
 We praise the teacher when we praise the taught ;  
 And, honouring thy son, we honour thee.

## “ On London Stones ”

(AUSTIN DOBSON)

[Henry Austin Dobson (1840-1921), although a distinguished Civil Service official, is better remembered as a critic, poet, and essayist of unfailing charm. He was a great authority on eighteenth-century literature. The following poem is interesting in view of the fact that the writer could only with the greatest difficulty be induced to leave London even for a holiday.]

On London stones I sometimes sigh  
For wider green and bluer sky ;—  
Too oft the trembling note is drowned  
In this huge city's varied sound ,—  
“ Pure song is country-born ”—I cry.

Then comes the spring,—the months go by,  
The last stray swallows seaward fly ;  
And I—I too !—no more am found  
On London stones !

In vain !—the woods, the fields deny  
That clearer strain I fain would try ,  
Mine is an urban Muse, and bound  
By some strange law to paven ground ;  
Abroad she pouts ,—she is not shy  
On London stones !

## Casterbridge (Dorchester)

(THOMAS HARDY)

[Thomas Hardy, born in Dorsetshire in 1840, has portrayed for all time the scenes and people of his native Wessex during the first half of the nineteenth century.]

Writing with rare insight of rural scenes and events, he touches towns but incidentally ; yet passages such as the following, taken from *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, bring before us with the utmost vividness the small country town as it was in early Victorian times Casterbridge is Dorchester ]

It was about ten o'clock, and market day, when Elizabeth paced up the High Street, in no great hurry, for to herself her position was only that of a poor relation deputed to hunt up a rich one. The front doors of the private houses were mostly left open at this warm autumn time, no thought of umbrella stealers disturbing the minds of the placid burgesses. Hence, through the long, straight entrance passages thus unclosed could be seen, as through tunnels, the mossy gardens at the back, glowing with nasturtiums, fuchsias, scarlet geraniums, "bloody warriors," snapdragons, and dahlias, this floral blaze being backed by crusted grey stonework remaining from a yet remoter Casterbridge than the venerable one visible in the street. The old-fashioned fronts of these houses, which had older than old-fashioned backs, rose sheer from the pavement, into which the bow-windows protruded like bastions, necessitating a pleasing *chassez-déchassez* movement to the time-pressed pedestrian at every few yards. He was bound also to evolve other Terpsichorean figures in respect of doorsteps, scrapers, cellar-hatches, church buttresses, and the overhanging angles of walks which, originally unobtrusive, had become bow-legged and knock-kneed.

In addition to these fixed obstacles which spoke so cheerfully of individual unrestraint as to boundaries, movables occupied the path and roadway to a perplexing extent. First the vans of the carriers in and out of Casterbridge, who hailed from Mellstock, Weatherbury, Hintock, Sherton-Abbas, Stickleford, Overcombe, and many other villages round. Their owners were numerous enough to be regarded as a

tribe, and had almost distinctiveness enough to be regarded as a race. Their vans had just arrived, and were drawn up on each side of the street in close file, so as to form in places a wall between the pavement and the roadway. Next every shop pitched out half its contents upon trestles and boxes on the kerb, extending the display each week a little further and further into the roadway, despite the expostulations of the two feeble old constables, until there remained but a tortuous defile for carriages down the centre of the street, which afforded fine opportunities for skill with the reins. Over the pavement on the sunny side of the way hung shop-blinds so constructed as to give the passenger's hat a smart buffet off his head as from the unseen hands of Cranstoun's Goblin Page, celebrated in romantic lore.

Horses for sale were tied in rows, their forelegs on the pavement, their hind legs in the street, in which position they occasionally nipped little boys by the shoulder who were passing to school. And any inviting recess in front of a house that had been modestly kept back from the general line was utilized by pig dealers as a pen for their stock.

The yeomen, farmers, dairymen, and townsmen, who came to transact business in these ancient streets, spoke in other ways than by articulation. Not to hear the words of your interlocutor in metropolitan centres is to know nothing of his meaning. Here the face, the arms, the hat, the stick, the body throughout spoke equally with the tongue. To express satisfaction the Casterbridge market-man added to his utterance a broadening of the cheeks, a crevicing of the eyes, a throwing back of the shoulders, which was intelligible from the other end of the street. If he wondered, though all Henchard's carts and wagons were rattling past him, you knew it from perceiving the inside of his crimson mouth, and a target-like circling of his eyes. Deliberation caused sundry attacks on the moss of



adjoining walls with the end of his stick, a change of his hat from the horizontal to the less so ; a sense of tediousness announced itself in a lowering of the person by spreading the knees to a lozenge-shaped aperture and contorting the arms. Chicanery, subterfuge, had hardly a place in the streets of this honest borough to all appearance ; and it was said that the lawyers in the Court House hard by occasionally threw in strong arguments for the other side out of pure generosity (though apparently by mischance) when advancing their own.

Thus Casterbridge was in most respects but the pole, focus, or nerve-knot of the surrounding country life ; differing from the many manufacturing towns which are as foreign bodies set down, like boulders on a plain, in a green world with which they have nothing in common. Casterbridge lived by agriculture at one remove further from the fountain head than the adjoining villagers—no more. The townsfolk understood every fluctuation in the rustic's condition, for it affected their receipts as much as the labourer's, they entered into the troubles and joys which moved the aristocratic families ten miles round—for the same reason. And even at the dinner-parties of the professional families the subjects of discussion were corn, cattle-disease, sowing and reaping, fencing and planting, while politics were viewed by them less from their own standpoint of burgesses with rights and privileges than from the standpoint of their county neighbours.

## Trafalgar ; or, The Merry Bells of Chester

(WILLIAM CANTON)

[Mr William Canton (1845) was for many years sub-editor of the *Glasgow Herald*. He is a poet of distinction. His poems about children are marked by peculiar grace

and charm. He is the author, among other works, of *The Invisible Playmate* and *A Child's Book of Saints* ]

O THE merry bells of Chester, ancient Chester on the  
Dee !

On that glittering autumn morning, eighteen five,  
Every Englishman was glad to be alive  
It was good to breathe this English air, to see  
English earth, with autumn field and reddening tree,  
And to hear the bells of Chester, ancient Chester on the  
Dee

For like morning-stars together, sweet and shrill,  
In a blithe recurrent cycle  
Sang St. Peter and St. Michael,  
John the Baptist and St Mary on the Hill ;  
And the quick exulting changes of their peal  
Made the heavens above them laugh, and the jubilant  
city reel  
In the streets the crowds were cheering Like a shout  
From each spire the bickering bunting rollicked out.

O that buoyant autumn morning, eighteen five,  
Every Englishman rejoiced to be alive ;  
And the heart of England throbbed from sea to sea,  
As the joy-bells clashed in Chester, jovial Chester on  
the Dee.

Hark, in pauses of the revel—sole and slow—  
Old St. Werburgh swung a heavy note of woe !  
Hark, between the jocund peals a single toll,  
Stern and muffled, marked the passing of a soul !  
English hearts were sad that day as sad could be ;  
English eyes so filled with tears they scarce could see ;  
And all the joy was dashed with grief in ancient  
Chester on the Dee !

Loss and triumph—joy and sorrow ! Far away  
Drave the great fight's wreckage down Trafalgar Bay.

O that glorious autumn morning, eighteen five,  
Every Englishman was glad to be alive !  
For the power of France was broken on the sea—  
But ten left of her thirty sail and three.  
Yet sad were English men as sad could be,  
For that, somewhere o'er the foreign wave, they knew  
Home to English ground and grass the dust of Nelson  
drew

Would to God that on that morning, eighteen five,  
England's greatest man of all had been alive,  
If but to breathe this English air, to see  
English earth, with autumn field and yellowing tree,  
And to hear the bells of Chester, joyful Chester on the  
Dee !

## Sunny Brighton

(RICHARD JEFFERIES)

[Richard Jefferies (1848–87), the son of a Wiltshire farmer, possessed a passionate love for Nature. His writings reveal not only a rare knowledge of the countryside, but a power of appreciative description such as few possess. Struggling against ill-health and poverty, he was compelled to reside much in towns, and it is easy to see from the following extract why Brighton specially appealed to him. The passage is part of an essay which appears in the volume, *The Open Air*]

THE bright light of Brighton brings all things into clear relief, giving them an edge and an outline, as steel burns with a flame like wood in oxygen, so the minute particles of iron in the atmosphere seem to burn and glow in the sunbeams, and a twofold illumination fills the air. Coming back to the place after a journey this brilliant light is very striking, and most new visitors notice it. Even a room with a northern aspect is full of light, too strong for some eyes, till

accustomed to it. I am a great believer in light—sunlight—and of my free will never let it be shut out with curtains. Light is essential to life, like air ; light is thought , light is as fresh air to the mind. Brilliant sunshine is reflected from the houses and fills the streets. The walls of the houses are clean and less discoloured by the deposit of carbon than usual in most towns, so that the reflection is stronger from these white surfaces. Shadow there is none in summer, for the shadows are lit up by diffusion. Something in the atmosphere throws light down into shaded places as if from a mirror. Waves beat ceaselessly on the beach, and the undulations of light flow continuously forwards into the remotest corners. Pure air, free from suspended matter, lets the light pass freely, and perhaps this absence of suspended matter is the reason that the heat is not so oppressive as would be supposed considering the glare. Certainly it is not so hot as London , on going up to town on a July or August day it seems much hotter there, so much so that one pants for air. Conversely in winter, London appears much colder, the thick dark atmosphere seems to increase the bitterness of the easterly winds, and returning to Brighton is entering a warmer because clearer air. Many complain of the brilliance of the light ; they say the glare is overpowering, but the eyes soon become acclimatized. This glare is one of the great recommendations of Brighton ; the strong light is evidently one of the causes of its healthfulness to those who need change. There is no such glowing light elsewhere along the south coast ; these things are very local.

Let nothing check the descent of those glorious beams of sunlight which fall at Brighton. Watch the pebbles on the beach ; the foam runs up and wets them, almost before it can slip back the sunshine has dried them again. So they are alternately wetted and dried. Bitter sea and glowing light, bright clear air,

dry as dry,—that describes the place. Spain is the country of sunlight, burning sunlight ; Brighton is a Spanish town in England, a Seville. Very bright colours can be worn in summer because of this powerful light ; the brightest are scarcely noticed, for they seem to be in concert with the sunshine. Is it difficult to paint in so strong a light ? Pictures in summer look dull and out of tune when this Seville sun is shining. Artificial colours of the palette cannot live in it. As a race we do not seem to care much for colour or art—I mean in the common things of daily life—else a great deal of colour might be effectively used in Brighton in decorating houses and woodwork. Much more colour might be put in the windows, brighter flowers and curtains ; more, too, inside the rooms ; the sober hues of London furniture and carpets are not in accord with Brighton light. Gold and ruby and blue, the blue of transparent glass, or purple, might be introduced, and the romance of colour freely indulged. At high tide of summer Spanish mantillas, Spanish fans, would not be out of place in the open air. No tint is too bright—scarlet, cardinal, anything the imagination fancies ; the brightest parasol is a matter of course. Stand, for instance, by the West Pier, on the Esplanade, looking east on a full-lit August day. The sea is blue, streaked with green, and is stilled with heat ; the low undulations can scarcely rise and fall for somnolence. The distant cliffs are white ; the houses yellowish-white ; the sky blue, more blue than fabled Italy. Light pours down, and the bitter salt sea wets the pebbles ; to look at them makes the mouth dry, in the unconscious recollection of the saltiness and bitterness. The flags droop, the sails of the fishing boats hang idle ; the land and sea are conquered by the great light of the sun.

## Falmouth

(W E. HENLEY)

[William Ernest Henley (1849-1903), born and educated in Gloucester, was an intimate friend of R. L. Stevenson, with whom he collaborated in several works. A fearless, vigorous, and outspoken critic, Henley displayed the same stalwart spirit of independence in his poems. The poem that follows is one of a series called *Echoes*, and appears in his collected poems under the heading "To D H"]

O, FALMOUTH is a fine town with ships in the bay,  
And I wish from my heart it's there I was to-day ;  
I wish from my heart I was far away from here,  
Sitting in my parlour and talking to my dear  
    For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want  
        to be.  
Our topsails are hoisted and we'll away to sea  
O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken  
    tree  
They're all growing green in the old countrie.

In Baltimore a-walking a lady I did meet  
With her babe on her arm, as she came down the  
    street ,  
And I thought how I sailed, and the cradle standing  
    ready  
For the pretty little babe that has never seen its  
    daddie.  
And it's home, dearie, home . . .

O, if it be a lass, she shall wear a golden ring ;  
And if it be a lad, he shall fight for his king :

With his dirk and his hat and his little jacket blue  
 He shall walk the quarter-deck as his daddie used to do.  
 And it's home, dearie, home . . .

O, there's a wind a-blowing, a-blowing from the west,  
 And that of all the winds is the one I like the best,  
 For it blows at our backs, and it shakes our pennon free,  
 And it soon will blow us home to the old countrie.

For it's home, dearie, home—it's home I want to  
 be.

Our topsails are hoisted, and we'll away to sea.  
 O, the oak and the ash and the bonnie birken tree  
 They're all growing green in the old countrie.

## The Verger in Chester Cathedral

(ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON)

[Robert Louis Stevenson, son and grandson of distinguished engineers, was born in Edinburgh in 1850. All his instincts drew him towards literature, and he published his first work, *An Inland Voyage*, in 1878. From that time he laboured strenuously, and several of his works have won enduring fame. Always hampered by ill-health, he finally settled in Samoa, where he died suddenly in 1894. His *Letters to his Family and Friends*, from which the following are taken, were edited by Mr. Sidney Colvin.]

BARMOUTH, *August 9th*

TO-DAY we saw the Cathedral at Chester, and, far more delightful, saw and heard a certain inimitable verger who took us round. He was full of a certain recondite, far-away humour that did not quite make you laugh at the time, but was somehow laughable to recollect. Moreover, he had so far a just imagination, and could put one in the right humour for seeing an old place, very much as, according to my

(2,608)

favourite text, Scott's novels and poems do for one. His account of the monks in the Scriptorium, with their cowls over their heads, in a certain sheltered angle of the cloister where the big Cathedral building kept the sun off the parchments, was all that could be wished ; and so too was what he added of the others pacing solemnly behind them and dropping, ever and again, on their knees before a little shrine there is in the wall, " to keep 'em in the frame of mind." You will begin to think me unduly biassed in this verger's favour if I go on to tell you his opinion of me. We got into a little side chapel, whence we could hear the choir children at practice, and I stopped a moment listening to them, with, I dare say, a very bright face, for the sound was delightful to me. " Ah," says he, " you're *very* fond of music ? " I said I was " Yes, I could tell that by your head," he answered. " There's a deal in that head." And he shook his own solemnly. I said it might be so, but I found it hard, at least, to get it out. Then my father cut in brutally, said anyway I had no ear, and left the verger so distressed and shaken in the foundations of his creed that, I hear, he got my father aside afterwards and said he was sure there was something in my face, and wanted to know what it was, if not music. He was relieved when he heard that I occupied myself with literature (which word, note here, I do not spell correctly). Good-night, and here's the verger's health ! R. L. S.

## The Lost Child

(ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON)

17 HERIOT ROW, EDINBURGH.

HERE is my long story : yesterday night, after having supped, I grew so restless that I was obliged to go out in search of some excitement. There was a half-



moon lying over on its back, and incredibly bright in the midst of a faint grey sky set with faint stars : a very inartistic moon, that would have damned a picture

At the most populous place of the city I found a little boy, three years old perhaps, half frantic with terror, and crying to every one for his "Mammy." This was about eleven, mark you People stopped and spoke to him, and then went on, leaving him more frightened than before. But I and a good-humoured mechanic came up together ; and I instantly developed a latent faculty for setting the hearts of children at rest. Master Tommy Murphy (such was his name) soon stopped crying, and allowed me to take him up and carry him ; and the mechanic and I trudged away along Princes Street to find his parents. I was soon so tired that I had to ask the mechanic to carry the bairn ; and you should have seen the puzzled contempt with which he looked at me for knocking in so soon He was a good fellow, however, although very impracticable and sentimental ; and he soon bethought him that Master Murphy might catch cold after his excitement, so we wrapped him up in my greatcoat. "Tobauga (Tobago) Street" was the address he gave us ; and we deposited him in a little grocer's shop and went through all the houses in the street without being able to find any one of the name of Murphy. Then I set off to the head police office, leaving my greatcoat in pawn about Master Murphy's person. As I went down one of the lowest streets in the town, I saw a little bit of life that struck me It was now half-past twelve, a little shop stood still half-open, and a boy of four or five years old was walking up and down before it imitating cockcrow. He was the only living creature within sight.

At the police office no word of Master Murphy's parents ; so I went back empty-handed. The good groceress, who had kept her shop open all this time,

could keep the child no longer ; her father, bad with bronchitis, said he must forth. So I got a large scone with currants in it, wrapped my coat about Tommy, got him up on my arm, and away to the police office with him : not very easy in my mind, for the poor child, young as he was—he could scarce speak—was full of terror for the “ office ” as he called it. He was now very grave and quiet and communicative with me ; told me how his father thrashed him, and divers household matters. Whenever he saw a woman on our way he looked after her over my shoulder and then gave his judgment : “ That’s no *her*,” adding sometimes, “ She has a wean wi’ her.” Meantime I was telling him how I was going to take him to a gentleman who would find out his mother for him quicker than ever I could, and how he must not be afraid of him, but be brave, as he had been with me. We had just arrived at our destination—we were just under the lamp—when he looked me in the face and said appealingly, “ He’ll no put me in the office ? ” And I had to assure him that he would not, even as I pushed open the door and took him in

The sergeant was very nice, and I got Tommy comfortably seated on a bench, and spirited him up with good words and the scone with the currants in it ; and then, telling him I was just going out to look for Mammy, I got my greatcoat and slipped away

Poor little boy ! he was not called for, I learn, until ten this morning. This is very ill written, and I’ve missed half that was picturesque in it , but to say truth, I am very tired and sleepy : it was two before I got to bed. However, you see, I had my excitement.

## A Cinque Port

(JOHN DAVIDSON)

[John Davidson (1857-1909) was born in Renfrewshire. After being a schoolmaster he became a journalist. He was drowned at Penzance in 1909. The following poem is taken from *Ballads and Songs* (1894) ]

BELOW the down the stranded town  
What may betide forlornly waits,  
With memories of smoky skies,  
When Gallic navies crossed the straits ;  
When waves with fire and blood grew bright,  
And cannon thundered through the night.

With swinging stride the rhythmic tide  
Bore to the harbour barque and sloop ,  
Across the bar the ship of war,  
In castled stern and lanterned poop,  
Came up with conquests on her lee,  
The stately mistress of the sea.

Where argosies have wooed the breeze,  
The simple sheep are feeding now ,  
And near and far across the bar  
The ploughman whistles at the plough ;  
Where once the long waves washed the shore,  
Larks from their lowly lodgings soar.

Below the down the stranded town  
Hears far away the rollers beat ,  
About the wall the seabirds call ,  
The salt wind murmurs through the street ;  
Forlorn the sea's forsaken bride  
Awaits the end that shall betide.

## Plymouth

(*Composed at dawn in the Bay of Naples*)

(ERNEST RADFORD)

[Ernest Radford (1857-1919), a West Country man, was educated at Cambridge. He was an art critic and a writer of verse. The following poem is from *Measured Steps* (1884) ]

Oh ! what know they of harbours  
Who toss not on the sea ?  
They tell of fairer havens,  
But none so fair there be

As Plymouth town outstretching  
Her quiet arms to me,  
Her breast's broad welcome spreading  
From Mewstone to Penlee.

And with this home-thought, darling,  
Come crowding thoughts of thee ;  
Oh ! what know they of harbours  
Who toss not on the sea ?

At the Grave of Charles Lamb  
in Edmonton

(SIR WILLIAM WATSON)

[These lines of a living poet, and a Yorkshireman, pay tribute to Lamb's intense affection for London. "The music of thy million feet" recalls to mind Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, who was

laid to rest beside Nelson in London's "eastern fane" of St Paul's :—

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?  
Here, in streaming London's central roar  
Let the sound of those he wrought for,  
And the feet of those he fought for,  
Echo round his bones for evermore.]

Not here, O teeming City, was it meet  
Thy lover, thy most faithful, should repose,  
But where the multitudinous life-tide flows,  
Whose ocean-murmur was to him more sweet  
Than melody of birds at morn, or bleat  
Of flocks in Spring-time, *there* should Earth enclose  
His earth, amid thy thronging joys and woes,  
There, 'neath the music of thy million feet.  
In love of thee this lover knew no peer.  
Thine eastern or thy western fane had made  
Fit habitation for his noble shade.  
Mother of mightier, nurse of none more dear,  
Not here, in rustic exile, O not here  
Thy Elia like an alien should be laid !

## How Taunton Town welcomed Monmouth's Men

(SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE)

[This extract is taken from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's spirited historical novel, *Micah Clarke*, which deals with Monmouth's rebellion in 1685. Micah Clarke and two companions, riding to join Monmouth, fall in with a company of peasants bent on the same errand, and after a successful encounter with a troop of dragoons, pursue their way to Taunton.]

FOR some time past we had been able to see in the valley beneath us the lights of Taunton town and the

long silver strip of the river Tone. The moon was shining brightly in a cloudless heaven, throwing a still and peaceful radiance over the fairest and richest of English valleys. Lordly manorial houses, pinnacled towers, clusters of nestling thatch-roofed cottages, broad silent stretches of cornland, dark groves with the glint of lamp-lit windows shining from their recesses—it all lay around us like the shadowy voiceless landscapes which stretch before us in our dreams. So calm and beautiful was the scene that we reined up our horses at the bend of the pathway, the tired and footsore peasants came to a halt, while even the wounded raised themselves in the wagon in order to feast their eyes upon this land of promise.

Master Pettigrue had concluded his thanksgiving, and was in the act of rising to his feet, when the musical peal of a bell rose up from the sleeping town before us. For a minute or more it rose and fell in its sweet clear cadence. Then a second with a deeper, harsher note joined in, and then a third, until the air was filled with the merry jangling. At the same time a buzz of shouting or huzzaing could be heard, which increased and spread until it swelled into a mighty uproar. Lights flashed in the windows, drums beat, and the whole place was astir. These sudden signs of rejoicing coming at the heels of the minister's prayer were seized upon as a happy omen by the superstitious peasants, who set up a glad cry, and pushing onwards were soon within the outskirts of the town.

The footpaths and causeway were black with throngs of the townsfolk, men, women, and children, many of whom were bearing torches and lanthorns, all flocking in the same direction. Following them we found ourselves in the market-place, where crowds of apprentice lads were piling up faggots for a bonfire, while others were broaching two or three great puncheons of ale. The cause of this sudden outbreak of rejoicing was, we learned, that news had just come in that Albe-

marle's Devonshire militia had partly deserted and partly been defeated at Axminster that very morning. On hearing of our own successful skirmish the joy of the people became more tumultuous than ever. They rushed in among us, pouring blessings on our heads, in their strange burring west-country speech, and embracing our horses as well as ourselves. Preparations were soon made for our weary companions. A long empty wool warehouse, thickly littered with straw, was put at their disposal, with a tub of ale, and a plentiful supply of cold meats and wheaten bread. For our own part we made our way down East Street through the clamorous hand-shaking crowd to the White Hart Inn, where after a hasty meal we were right glad to seek our couches. Late into the night, however, our slumbers were disturbed by the rejoicings of the mob, who, having burned the effigies of Lord Sunderland and of Gregory Alford, Mayor of Lyme, continued to sing west-country songs and Puritan hymns into the small hours of the morning.

The fair town in which we now found ourselves was, although Monmouth had not yet reached it, the real centre of the rebellion. It was a prosperous place with a great woollen and kersey trade, which gave occupation to as many as seven thousand inhabitants. It stood high, therefore, among English boroughs, being inferior only to Bristol, Norwich, Bath, Exeter, York, Worcester, and Nottingham amongst the country towns. Taunton had long been famous not only for its own resources and for the spirit of its inhabitants, but also for the beautiful and highly cultivated country which spread around it, and gave rise to a gallant breed of yeomen. From time immemorial the town has been a rallying-point for the party of liberty, and for many years it had leaned to the side of Republicanism in politics and of Puritanism in religion. No place in the kingdom had fought more stoutly for the Parliament, and though it had been twice besieged by Goring, the

burghers, headed by the brave Robert Blake, had fought so desperately that the Royalists had been compelled each time to retire discomfited. On the second occasion the garrison had been reduced to dog's-flesh and horse-flesh, but no word of surrender had come either from them or their heroic commander. After the Restoration the Privy Council had shown their recollection of the part played by the Somersetshire town, by issuing a special order that the battlements which fenced round the maiden stronghold should be destroyed. Thus, at the time of which I speak, nothing but a line of ruins and a few unsightly mounds represented the massive line of wall which had been so bravely defended by the last generation of townsmen. There were not wanting, however, many other relics of those stormy times. The houses on the outskirts were still scarred and splintered from the effects of the bombs and grenades of the Cavaliers. Indeed, the whole town bore a grimly martial appearance, as though she were a veteran among boroughs who had served in the past, and was not averse to seeing the flash of guns and hearing the screech of shot once more.

Charles's Council might destroy the battlements which his soldiers had been unable to take, but no royal edict could do away with the resolute spirit and strong opinions of the burghers. Many of them, born and bred amidst the clash of civil strife, had been fired from their infancy by the tales of the old war, and by reminiscences of the great assault when Lunsford's babe-eaters were hurled down the great breach by the strong arms of their fathers. In this way there was bred in Taunton a fiercer and more soldierly spirit than is usual in an English country town, and this flame was fanned by the unwearied ministrings of a chosen band of Nonconformist clergymen, amongst whom Joseph Alleine was the most conspicuous. No better focus for a revolt could have been chosen, for



no city valued so highly those liberties and that creed which was in jeopardy.

A large body of the burghers had already set out to join the rebel army, but a good number had remained behind to guard the city, and these were reinforced by gangs of peasants, like the one to which we had attached ourselves, who had trooped in from the surrounding country, and now divided their time between listening to their favourite preachers and learning to step in line and to handle their weapons. In yard, street, and market-square there was marching and drilling, night, morning, and noon. As we rode out after breakfast the whole town was ringing with the shouting of orders and the clatter of arms.

The good townsmen of Taunton, with their wives and their daughters, had meanwhile been assembling on the balconies and at the windows which overlooked the square, whence they might have a view of the pageant. The grave, square-bearded, broadclothed burghers, and their portly dames in velvet and three-piled taffeta, looked down from every post of vantage, while here and there a pretty timid face peeping out from a Puritan coif made good the old claim, that Taunton excelled in beautiful women as well as in gallant men. The side-walks were crowded with the commoner folk—old white-bearded wool-workers, stern-faced matrons, country lasses with their shawls over their heads, and swarms of children, who cried out with their treble voices for King Monmouth and the Protestant succession.

## A London Plane-Tree

(AMY LEVY)

[Amy Levy (1861–89) began writing in her thirteenth year. Her first volume, *Xanthippe and Other Poems*, was published in 1881. *A London Plane-Tree* appeared in

1889. Her novels are *The Romance of a Shop*, *Reuben Sachs*, and *Miss Meredith* ]

GREEN is the plane-tree in the square,  
The other trees are brown ;  
They droop and pine for country air ;  
The plane-tree loves the town.

Here from my garret-pane I mark  
The plane-tree bud and blow,  
Shed her recuperative bark,  
And spread her shade below.

Among her branches, in and out,  
The city breezes play ;  
The dun fog wraps her round about ;  
Above, the smoke curls grey.

Others the country take for choice,  
And hold the town in scorn ;  
But she has listened to the voice  
On city breezes borne.

## Oldcastle

(ARNOLD BENNETT)

[Arnold Bennett, one of the most notable novelists of the early twentieth century, has written largely of the Pottery towns, and has succeeded in awakening widespread interest in that impressive, if unlovely, district. The "Five Towns," Burslem, Stoke, Longton, Tunstall, and Hanley, appear in his works as Bursley, Knype, Longshaw, Turnhill, and Hanbridge. "Oldcastle" is Newcastle-under-Lyme. The following extracts are taken from his fine novel, *Clayhanger* ]

EDWIN CLAYHANGER stood on the steep-sloping, red-bricked canal bridge, in the valley between Bursley and its suburb Hillport. In that neighbourhood the

Knype and Mersey canal formed the western boundary of the industrialism of the Five Towns. To the east rose pitheads, chimneys, and kilns, tier above tier, dim in their own mists. To the west, Hillport Fields, grimed but possessing authentic hedgerows and winding paths, mounted broadly up to the sharp ridge on which stood Hillport Church, a landmark. Beyond the ridge, and partly protected by it from the driving smoke of the Five Towns, lay the fine and ancient Tory borough of Oldcastle, from whose historic Middle School Edwin Clayhanger was now walking home. The fine and ancient Tory borough provided education for the whole of the Five Towns, but the relentless ignorance of its prejudices had blighted the district. A hundred years earlier the canal had only been obtained after a vicious Parliamentary fight between industry and the fine and ancient borough, which saw in canals a menace to its importance as a centre of traffic. Fifty years earlier the fine and ancient borough had succeeded in forcing the greatest railway line in England to run through unpopulated country five miles off instead of through the Five Towns, because it loathed the mere conception of a railway. And now, people are inquiring why the Five Towns, with a railway system special to itself, is characterized by a perhaps excessive provincialism. These interesting details have everything to do with the history of Edwin Clayhanger, as they have everything to do with the history of each of the two hundred thousand souls in the Five Towns. Oldcastle guessed not the vast influences of its sublime stupidity.

It was a breezy Friday in July 1872. The canal, which ran north and south, reflected a blue and white sky. Towards the bridge, from the north came a long narrow canal-boat roofed with tarpaulins; and towards the bridge, from the south came a similar craft, sluggishly creeping. The towing-path was a morass of sticky brown mud, for in the way of rain that year

was breaking the records of a century and a half. Thirty yards in front of each boat an unhappy skeleton of a horse floundered its best in the quagmire. The honest endeavour of one of the animals received a frequent tonic from a bare-legged girl of seven, who heartily curled a whip about its crooked large-jointed legs. The ragged and filthy child danced in the rich mud round the horse's flanks with the simple joy of one who had been rewarded for good behaviour by the unrestricted use of a whip for the first time.

## Duck Square

(ARNOLD BENNETT)

DUCK SQUARE was one of the oldest, if the least imposing, of all the public places in Bursley. It had no traffic across it, being only a sloping rectangle, like a vacant lot, with Trafalgar Road and Wedgwood Street for its exterior sides, and no outlet on its inner sides. The buildings on those inner sides were low and humble, and, as it were, withdrawn from the world, the chief of them being the ancient Duck Inn, where the hand-bellringers used to meet. But Duck Square looked out upon the very birth of Trafalgar Road, that wide, straight thoroughfare, whose name dates it, which had been invented, in the lifetime of a few then living, to unite Bursley with Hanbridge. It also looked out upon the birth of several old pack-horse roads which Trafalgar Road had supplanted. One of these was Woodisun Bank, that wound slowly up hill and down dale, apparently always choosing the longest and hardest route, to Hanbridge; and another was Aboukir Street, formerly known as Warm Lane, that reached Hanbridge in a manner equally difficult and unhurried. At the junction of Trafalgar Road and Aboukir Street stood the Dragon Hotel,

once the great posting-house of the town, from which all roads started. Duck Square had watched coaches and wagons stop at and start from the Dragon Hotel for hundreds of years. It had seen the Dragon rebuilt in brick and stone, with fine bay windows on each story, in early Georgian times, and it had seen even the new structure become old and assume the dignity of age. Duck Square could remember strings of pack-mules driven by women, "trapesing" in zig-zags down Woodisun Bank and Warm Lane, and occasionally falling, with awful smashes of the crockery they carried, in the deep, slippery, scarce passable mire of the first slants into the valley. Duck Square had witnessed the slow declension of these roads into mere streets, and slum streets at that, and the death of all mules, and the disappearance of all coaches and all neighing and prancing and whip-cracking romance; while Trafalgar Road, simply because it was straight and broad and easily graded, flourished with toll-bars and a couple of pair-horsed trams that ran on lines. And many people were proud of these cushioned trams; but perhaps they had never known that coach-drivers used to tell each other about the state of the turn at the bottom of Warm Lane (since absurdly re-named in honour of an Egyptian battle), and that Woodisun Bank (now unnoticed save by doubtful characters, policemen, and schoolboys) was once regularly "taken" by four horses at a canter. The history of human manners is crunched and embedded in the very macadam of that part of the borough, and the burgesses unheedingly tread it down every day and talk gloomily about the ugly smoky prose of industrial manufacture. And yet the Dragon Hotel, safely surviving all revolutions by the mighty virtue and attraction of ale, stands before them to remind them of the interestingness of existence.

## The News of Waterloo brought to Birmingham

(ERNEST MARSTON RUDLAND)

[Mr. E M Rudland was born in 1875 at Birmingham, and was for twelve years a member of its City Council. He published two volumes of poems before his *Ballads of Old Birmingham* appeared in 1914. He is an accountant by profession.]

WAS never a coach that was driven so fast,  
As we drove from London town  
Was never a throat but was hoarse at last,  
As we shouted the tidings down.  
We hoisted the flags and away we flew,  
Glad to carry the tidings through,  
Mad to carry the tidings through,  
Through to Birmingham town.

Was never a shout men's hearts that stirred  
As the cheers we raised that day.  
Was never a man but we gave the word,  
And never were men so gay.  
We shouted the news and away we sped,  
Glad to carry the news ahead,  
Mad to carry the news ahead ;  
Never were men so gay.

Was never a village nor town but cheered  
As we rode upon the wind.  
And ever we heard as the horses reared,  
The joy-bells peal behind.  
We coaxed the horses and sped them on,  
Mad to arrive and glad to be gone,  
Glad to arrive and mad to be gone,  
• With the joy-bells on the wind.

Was never a task but men laid it down,  
There was never a day like the day  
We rode from London to Birmingham town,  
Nor ever a land so gay.  
We bore the news of Waterloo,  
We were mad to carry the tidings through,  
Glad to carry the tidings through,  
"Wellington's won the day!"

## In the Olden Days

*(A Ballad of Old Birmingham)*

(ERNEST MARSTON RUDLAND)

O, MANY and many have kept their tryst  
Under the Olden Cross  
And many a lad and lass have kissed  
Under the far Welsh Cross,  
And every night at evenfall  
'Twas, O, for the gardens of old Vauxhall.

From the church that is called by St Martin's name,  
And the seat of the ancient Lords,  
By the moated grange the lovers came  
Leaping the stiles and fords.  
'Twas across the fields to Edgbaston,  
Arm in arm in the days ago.

'Twas, O, for the game on the bowling-green,  
With the Cherry Orchard nigh,  
Where the tower of the ancient Guild was seen  
In the slant of the western sky  
'Twas, "Corbett, fill me the tankard yet,"  
In the olden days when friends were met.

'Twas, O, for the coach in the olden days,  
That's come from London town.

'Twas, " Wellington's fought the French relays,"  
 And " Nelson's driven them down."  
 O, loudly they cheered in the days ago,  
 When the coach came home to the olden Swan.

## Bradford

(ANONYMOUS)

THOU art not fair as Southron cities are ;  
 No river mirrors thy Cathedral tower ;  
 Thy sun is clouded by thy busy smoke ,  
 Throb of thy engines marks the passing hour.

Yet thou hast beauty. Folded in thy hills,  
 That wrap thee round as sheepfolds fold in sheep,  
 Their sides spread over with thy teeming mills,  
 Whose stacks, like watch-fires, do thy vigil keep.

Thou earn'st thy bread, clothing the sons of men,  
 Following a craft coeval with the race ;  
 Thy tops and noils, so commonplace to thee,  
 Tell of a day before the Golden Fleece

E'en as a younger son of some great house  
 That never thought t' inherit a great name,  
 Thou hast inherited the staple trade  
 By which thy country trode her way to fame.

'Twas not for skill and craftsmanship alone,  
 But for the health and wealth of them that wrought,  
 Those old gilds strove, that held in trust of yore  
 The ancient mystery of the weaver's art.

Thou strivest likewise. Thus thou stand'st foursquare,  
 Knit by thy purpose, while Time's hour-glass runs,  
 Shaping thy policy to one chief aim—  
 To give an equal chance to all thy sons. . . .



Thy very names have power to stir the blood  
Of those that know thee—Marshfield, Laisterdyke,  
Low Moor, Great Horton, Woodroyd, Bolling Hall,  
Idle, Raw Nook,—come, take the tram for Wyke !

## The Streets

(JOHN FREEMAN)

[John Freeman was born in London in 1880. He has published several volumes of verse and a volume of critical studies, *The Moderns* (1916). This poem is taken from *Memories of Childhood* (1919).]

MARLBORO' and Waterloo and Trafalgar,  
Tuileries, Talavera, Valenciennes,  
Were strange names all, and all familiar ;

For down their streets I went, early and late  
(Is there a street where I have never been  
Of all those hundreds, narrow, skylless, straight ?)—

Early and late, they were my woods and meadows ;  
The rain upon their dust my summer smell ;  
Their scant herb and brown sparrows and harsh  
    shadows

Were all my spring. Was there another spring ?  
I knew their noisy desolation well,  
Drinking it up as a child drinks everything,

Knowing no other world than brick and stone,  
With one rich memory of earth all bright.  
Now all is fallen into oblivion——

All that I was, in years of school and play,  
Things that I hated, things that were delight,  
All are forgotten, or shut all away

Behind a creaking door that opens slow.  
 But there's a child that walks those streets of war,  
 Hearing his running footsteps as they go

Echoed from house to house, and wondering  
 At Marlboro', Waterloo, and Trafalgar ,  
 And at night, when the yellow gas lamps fling

Unsteady shadows, singing for company ;  
 Yet loving the lighted dark, and any star  
 Caught by sharp roofs, in a narrow net of sky.

## William Herschel Conducts

(ALFRED NOYES)

[Alfred Noyes is perhaps best known for his *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern*. The following passage is taken from *The Torch-Bearers*, an epic on the Great Astronomers, and the first volume, it is hoped, of a trilogy on the story of scientific discovery. Sir William Herschel, the discoverer of the planet Uranus, conducts at a performance of the *Messiah* in the Pump-room at Bath for the last time, having resolved henceforth to devote himself to astronomy.]

*Was it a dream ?—that crowded concert-room  
 In Bath ; that sea of ruffles and laced coats ;  
 And William Herschel, in his powdered wig,  
 Waiting upon the platform, to conduct  
 His choir and Linley's orchestra ? He stood  
 Tapping his music-rest, lost in his own thoughts  
 And (did I hear or dream them ?) all were mine :*

My periwig's askew, my ruffle stained  
 With grease from my new telescope !

Ach, to-morrow

How Caroline will be vexed, although she grows  
 Almost as bad as I, who cannot leave  
 My workshop for one evening.

I must give  
One last recital at St. Margaret's,  
And then—farewell to music.

Who can lead  
Two lives at once ?

Yet—it has taught me much,  
Thrown curious lights upon our world, to pass  
From one life to another. Much that I took  
For substance turns to shadow. I shall see  
No throngs like this again ; wring no more praise  
Out of their hearts ; forgo that instant joy  
—Let those who have not known it count it vain—  
When human souls at once respond to yours.  
Here, on the brink of fortune and of fame,  
As men account these things, the moment comes  
When I must choose between them and the stars ;  
And I have chosen.

Handel, good old friend,  
We part to-night. Hereafter, I must watch  
That other wand, to which the worlds keep time

What has decided me ? That marvellous night  
When—ah, how difficult it will be to guide,  
With all these wonders whirling through my brain!—  
After a Pump-room concert I came home  
Hot-foot, out of the fluttering sea of fans,  
Coquelicot-ribboned belles and periwigged beaux,  
To my Newtonian telescope.

The design  
Was his ; but more than half the joy my own,  
Because it was the work of my own hand,  
A new one, with an eye six inches wide,  
Better than even the best that Newton made.  
Then, as I turned it on the *Gemini*,  
And the deep stillness of those constant lights,  
Castor and Pollux, lucid pilot-stars,  
Began to calm the fever of my blood,  
I saw, O, first of all mankind I saw

The disk of my new planet gliding there  
Beyond our tumults, in that realm of peace. . . .

How strange it seems—this buzzing concert-room !  
There's Doctor Burney bowing and, behind him,  
His fox-eyed daughter Fanny.

Is it a dream,  
These crowding midgets, dense as clustering bees  
In some great bee-skep ?

Now, as I lift my wand,  
A silence grips them, and the strings begin,  
Throbbing. The faint lights flicker in gusts of sound.  
Before me, glimmering like a crescent moon,  
The dim half circle of the choir awaits  
Its own appointed time.

Beside me now,  
Watching my wand, plump and immaculate  
From buckled shoes to that white bunch of lace  
Under his chin, the midget tenor rises,  
Music in hand, a linnnet and a king.  
The bullfinch bass, that other emperor,  
Leans back indifferently, and clears his throat  
As if to say, " This prelude leads to *Me !* "  
While, on their own proud thrones, on either hand,  
The sumptuously bosomed midget queens,  
Contralto and soprano, jealously eye  
Each other's plumage.

Round me the music throbs  
With an immortal passion. I grow aware  
Of an appalling mystery. . . . We, this throng  
Of midgets, playing, listening, tense and still,  
Are sailing on a midget ball of dust  
We call our planet ; will have sailed through space  
Ten thousand leagues before this music ends.  
What does it mean ? O God, what *can* it mean ?—  
This weird hushed ant-hill with a thousand eyes ;  
These midget periwigs ; all those little blurs,  
Tief over tier, of faces, masks of flesh,

Corruptible, hiding each its hopes and dreams,  
Its tragi-comic dreams.

And all this throng  
Will be forgotten, mixed with dust, crushed out,  
Before this book of music is outworn  
Or that tall organ crumbles. Violins  
Outlast their players. Other hands may touch  
That harpischord ; but ere this planet makes  
Another threescore journeys round its sun,  
These breathing listeners will have vanished. Whither?  
I watch my moving hands, and they grow strange !  
What is it moves this body ? What am I ?  
How came I here, a ghost, to hear that voice  
Of infinite compassion, far away,  
Above the throbbing strings, hark ! *Comfort ye. . . .*

Shall I not, one day, after faithful years,  
Find that thy heavens are built on music, too,  
And hear, once more, above thy throbbing worlds  
This voice of all compassion, *Comfort ye,—*  
*Yes—comfort ye, my people, saith your God ?*

## Liverpool Docks

(DIXON SCOTT)

[Dixon Scott was born in 1881, and died as a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery in Gallipoli in 1915. For some years he worked in a bank in Liverpool, and then received a Fellowship in Liverpool University. His gifts as a critic were considerable, and some of his work, published in the *Liverpool Courier*, the *Manchester Guardian*, and the *Bookman*, has been printed since his death in book form under the title *Men of Letters*. The following extract is taken from his fine work, *Liverpool*. Scott was always a provincial, and gloried in it. He saw in it an advantage which he thus strikingly expressed. "A Londoner," he said, "sees life at an angle, foreshortened,

as from a stage-box ; instead of taking to it gradually, breast on, from the primitive beach, every step an adventure, he nips into it aslant, deep water at once, from the door of his sophisticated bathing-van—a solid half of experience irrecoverably missed ”]

It is a region, this seven-mile sequence of granite-lipped lagoons, which is invested, as may be supposed, with some conspicuous properties of romance, and yet its romance is never of just that quality which one might perhaps expect. It is not here, certainly, in spite of the coming and going of great ships, and the aching appeal of brine, that the mind is moved to any deep sense of kinship with the folk who wielded the river-weapon in old days. The place is as modern as the town, as purged of traditions as the town, and the drama that goes on here is one that has never been enacted in the world before. Its effectiveness, indeed (I do not now speak of its efficiency), is a thing that aligns with no preconceived notions of effectiveness. Neither of the land nor of the sea, but possessing almost in excess both the stability of the one and the constant flux of the other—too immense, too filled with the vastness of the outer, to carry any sense of human handicraft—this strange territory of the Docks seems, indeed, to form a kind of fifth element, a place charged with dæmonic issues and dæmonic silences, where men move like puzzled slaves, fretting under orders they cannot understand, fumbling with great forces that have long passed out of their control . . .

That, certainly, is the first impression—an impression that has nothing whatever to do with the romance of commerce or the ingenuity of man, but that is simply the effect of the unhuman spaciousness of it all, the strangely quiet, strangely patient presence of great ships, the vast leaning shadows, the smooth imprisoned waters, the slow white movements of a sea-bird gravely dipping and curving, dipping and curving, between the shadow and the sun, the sudden emerg-

ence in the midst of this solemnity of some great fever of monstrous echoing activity. Afterwards, of course, as the senses grow accustomed to the new order of things, to the frightening spaciousness and the bursts of tangled effort, there ensues another attitude. Names catch the eye: Naples, Hong-Kong, Para, and the imagination gets its practised opportunity. The sudden activities, too—the clustered, wrangling cranes, perched on their high roofs, and pecking tirelessly, the bound, leaning carcass of the ship below them, bleeding from a score of wounds, the cranes about her own masts adding to the riot, the long sheds, ringing with echoes, dappled with tiny figures delving in a long ruin of all the goods of the world—they begin to affect the mind more intimately. You find yourself in the shadow of some slab hill of cotton bales, or peering up the slopes of a swelling cone of grain, a sibilant alp of gold, and you begin to envision the anæmic spinster who will one day wrap herself in some part of that sodden mound, or the white hen, in some dreamful farmyard, that will one day peck this grain. . . . Or you come down to the Docks after nightfall, passing out of the greasy silence of the northern streets, under the terrace of the Overhead Railway, and so through the gates behind the Huskisson. The air is troubled with a soft sustained groaning: the *Saxonia* (let us say) is at her berth discharging. She arrived from Boston on Thursday, she will sail again on Tuesday, and every instant, day and night, that soft moaning will continue. And that direful sound, and the torment of labour going forward, in a shower of green light, beneath the vague riven masses of the liner, serve somehow to drive you on to thoughts concerning Liverpool's efficiency and tirelessness, concerning the bigness of her interests.

## Afterglow

*(at Barmouth in Merionethshire)*

(CICELY FOX SMITH)

[Miss Cicely Fox Smith was born at Lymm, in Cheshire, in 1882. Before she was twenty-four she had published four volumes of verse. The two following poems are taken from the fourth of these volumes, *Wings of the Morning* (1904) ]

WET, streaming sand, and the tide going down,  
Boats on the beach, and the sails patched and brown,  
And the hearth-smoke hanging blue up above the  
drowsy town.

Strong scent of weed blowing off the harbour-bar,  
A liner's trail of smoke on the skyline faint and far,  
And the bell-buoy clanging, and a lonely star.

Wet gleaming shore, and the sea-gull sweeping free,  
A swinging lamp alight in the ropes by the quay,  
And the wind singing low of a ship that waits for me.

## London Pool

(CICELY FOX SMITH)

LONDON POOL's in London town  
(Ay, boys ! O boys !)  
London Pool's in London town,  
Where the great ships anchor down !  
O to shake our canvas free,  
Hear the cordage cheerily  
Whistling to the open sea  
Down from London Pool, O !



London Pool's a crowded place,  
    (Ay, boys ! O boys !)  
London Pool's a crowded place,  
Crafts and crews of every race !  
O to hear the clanking chain  
Trail along the wharf again—  
Hear the tautening ropes astrain  
    Down from London Pool, O !

London Pool's a gallant sight  
    (Ay, boys ! O boys !)  
London Pool's a gallant sight,  
Toil by day and glare by night !  
O to shake our heels and go—  
Feel the four free winds ablow,  
Hail the lights of long ago  
    Down from London Pool, O !

## In Lady Street

(JOHN DRINKWATER)

[John Drinkwater, a notable modern poet and dramatist, published his first book in 1911. A native of Birmingham, he has not been without honour in his own city, the University of which conferred upon him, in 1919, the degree of Master of Arts. *In Lady Street* appears in the volume entitled *Poems, 1908-14*. The "Lady" Street here pictured is Gooch Street, Birmingham.]

ALL day long the traffic goes  
In Lady Street by dingy rows  
Of sloven houses, tattered shops—  
Fried fish, old clothes, and fortune-tellers—  
Tall trams on silver-shining rails,  
With grinding wheels and swaying tops,

And lorries with their corded bales,  
And screeching cars. "Buy, buy!" the sellers  
Of rags and bones and sickening meat  
Cry all day long in Lady Street.

And when the sunshine has its way  
In Lady Street, then all the grey  
Dull desolation grows in state  
More dull and grey and desolate,  
And the sun is a shamefast thing,  
A lord not comely-housed, a god  
Seeing what gods must blush to see,  
A song where it is ill to sing,  
And each gold ray despitiously  
Lies like a gold ironic rod.

Yet one grey man in Lady Street  
Looks for the sun. He never bent  
Life to his will, his travelling feet  
Have scaled no cloudy continent,  
Nor has the sickle-hand been strong.  
He lives in Lady Street; a bed,  
Four cobwebbed walls.

But all day long  
A time is singing in his head  
Of youth in Gloucester lanes. He hears  
The wind among the barley blades,  
The tapping of the woodpeckers  
On the smooth beeches, thistle-spades  
Slicing the sinewy roots; he sees  
The hooded filberts in the copse  
Beyond the loaded orchard trees,  
The netted avenues of hops;  
He smells the honeysuckle thrown  
Along the hedge. He lives alone,  
Alone—yet not alone, for sweet  
Are Gloucester lanes in Lady Street.

Aye, Gloucester lanes. For down below  
The cobwebbed room this grey man plies  
A trade, a coloured trade. A show  
Of many-coloured merchandise  
Is in his shop. Brown filberts there  
And apples red with Gloucester air,  
And cauliflowers he keeps, and round  
Smooth marrows grown on Gloucester ground,  
Fat cabbages and yellow plums,  
And gaudy brave chrysanthemums.  
And times a glossy pheasant lies  
Among his store, not Tyrian dyes  
More rich than are the neck-feathers ;  
And tunes a prize of violets,  
Or dewy mushrooms satin-skinned,  
And times an unfamiliar wind  
Robbed of its woodland favour stirs  
Gay daffodils this grey man sets  
Among his treasures.

All day long

In Lady Street the traffic goes  
By dingy houses, desolate rows  
Of shops that stare like hopeless eyes.  
Day long the sellers cry their cries,  
The fortune-tellers tell no wrong  
Of lives that know not any right,  
And drift, that has not even the will  
To drift, toils through the day until  
The wage of sleep is won at night  
But this grey man heeds not at all  
The hell of Lady Street. His stall  
Of many-coloured merchandise  
He makes a shining paradise,  
As all day long chrysanthemums  
He sells, and red and yellow plums  
And cauliflowers. In that one spot  
Of Lady Street the sun is not

Ashamed to shine and send a rare  
Shower of colour through the air ;  
The grey man says the sun is sweet  
On Gloucester lanes in Lady Street.

## Sheffield

(EDWARD CARPENTER, born 1844)

[The following is from *Towards Democracy*, published  
by Messrs George Allen and Unwin ]

WHERE a spur of the moors runs forward into the  
great town,  
And above the squalid bare steep streets, over a de-  
serted quarry, the naked rock lifts itself into the  
light,  
There, lifted above the smoke, I stood,  
And below lay Sheffield.

The great wind blew over the world,  
The great soft south-west, making a clear light along  
the far horizon ;  
The sky overhead was serenest blue, and here and  
there a solitary white cloud scudded swiftly  
below it.  
The great soft wind ! How it blew in gusts as it  
would unroot the very rocks, eddying and whist-  
ling round the angles !  
The great autumnal wind ! bearing from the valley  
below clouds of paper and rubbish instead of  
dead leaves.

Yet the smoke still lay over Sheffield.  
Sullenly it crawled and spread ;  
Round the bases of the tall chimneys, over the roofs

of the houses, in waves—and the city was like  
a city of chimneys and spires rising out of a  
troubled sea—

From the windward side, where the roads were shining  
wet with recent rain,  
Right across the city, gathering, mounting, as it went,  
To the Eastward side, where it stood high like a wall,  
blotting out the land beyond,  
Sullenly it crawled and spread.

Dead leaden sound of forge-hammers,  
Gaping mouths of chimneys,  
Lumbering and rattling of huge drays through the  
streets,  
Pallid faces moving to and fro in myriads,  
The sun, so brilliant here, to those below like a red  
ball, just visible, hanging ;  
The drunkard reeling past , the file-cutter humped  
over his bench, with ceaseless skill of chisel and  
hammer cutting his hundred thousand file-teeth  
per day—lead poison and paralysis slowly creep-  
ing through his frame ;  
The gaunt woman in the lens-grinding shop, pre-  
paring spectacle-glasses without end for the  
grindstone—in eager dumb mechanical haste,  
for her work is piece-work ;  
Barefoot skin-diseased children picking the ash-heaps  
over, sallow hollow-cheeked young men, pre-  
maturely aged ones,  
The attic, the miserable garret under the defective  
roof,  
The mattress on the floor, the few coals in the corner,  
White jets of steam, long ribbons of black smoke,  
Furnaces glaring through the night, beams of lurid  
light thrown obliquely up through the smoke,  
Night workers returning home wearied in the dismal  
dawn—  
Ah ! how long ? how long ?

And as I lifted my eyes, lo ! across the great wearied  
throbbing city the far unblemished hills,  
Hills of thick moss and heather,  
Coming near in the clear light, in the recent rain yet  
shining.  
And over them along the horizon moving, the gorgeous  
procession of shining clouds,  
And beyond them, lo ! in fancy, the sea and the  
shores of other lands,  
And the great globe itself curving with its land and  
its sea and its clouds in supreme beauty among  
the stars.

## The Children's Bells

(ELEANOR FARJEON)

[Miss Eleanor Farjeon was born in 1881, and is a writer of poetry and fanciful prose. Her best known prose romance, *Martin Pippin in the Apple Orchard*, was published in 1920. She has written a number of songs and verses for children, including the *Nursery Rhymes of London Town*, which first appeared in *Punch*. The following lines commemorate the ringing of the half-muffled City bells in honour of the bell-ringers who fell in the war ; the bells of St. Clement Danes were unable to take part, owing to a defect in the framework.]

WHERE are your Oranges ?  
Where are your Lemons ?  
What, are you silent now,  
Bells of St. Clement's ?  
You, of all bells that rang  
Once in old London,  
You, of all bells that sang,  
Utterly undone ?  
You whom all children know  
Ere they know letters,

## ELEANOR FARJEON

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Making Big Ben himself  
Call you his betters ?  
Where are your lovely tones  
Fruitful and mellow,  
Full-flavoured orange-gold,  
Clear lemon-yellow ?  
Ring again, sing again,  
Bells of St Clement's !  
Call as you swing again,  
" Oranges ! Lemons ! "  
Fatherless children  
Are listening near you—  
Sing for the children,  
The fathers will hear you.

## COMMENTARY AND QUESTIONS

### *London*

1. What are the features which inspire Dunbar to speak of London as the "flower of cities all"?

2. Is he right in concentrating attention on its people? Note how again and again he returns to this point.

3. Which natural feature calls forth his praise? Trace the same in other extracts on London quoted in this volume

4. How far may Dunbar be considered as expressing here the spirit of his age?

### *The Entry of Edward V into London*

Pageants played a great part in city-life in Tudor days. Was this a pageant, or more?

### *Dick Whittington*

1. It is a strange fate that has turned a great mediæval merchant into the hero of a tale for children. Can you parallel this?

2. Names enshrine history. What examples occur here?

3. What features of this sketch show a man of great breadth of mind?

4. Note the touch "of this man's owne hand." What is its significance?



*Oxford and Cambridge. Town and Gown*

1. Why was Harrison well fitted to deal with so delicate a matter as the comparison of the Universities?

2. Note his skilful balancing of the two. Why is his conclusion inevitable?

3. Where are his sympathies in *Town and Gown*? But what passage shows that he was not blinded by sympathy?

*The Siege of Exeter*

1. What evil pictures are conjured up by "the sweetness of such spoils"?

2. After reading the account of the siege, read Charles Reade's picture of a siege in *The Cloister and the Hearth*.

3. How does the passage reveal the Tudor art of managing men?

4. Why, in all the foregoing extracts, is attention concentrated on the *citizens*, not the visible *city*?

*The Merry Bells of Oxford*

Note the pleasant contrast afforded by these two verses, and the pretty, unexpected humour of the second. Seek other examples of a similar nature in the works of Herrick and Suckling.

*Herrick's Return*

1. Why should Herrick dislike the West Country, seeing that it was strongly Royalist?

2. Does not his enthusiasm carry him too far? What phrase would scarcely bear close questioning? Compare the views of John Ridd in *Lorna Doone*.

*The Long Vacation*

1. There is little smoothness or beauty of phrase here. Wherein lies the attractiveness of the extracts?

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2. What evidence does the passage afford of the rough nature of the age ?

3. Why should Davenant see only the grotesque in the scenes he pictures ?

### *News from Newcastle*

1. What features give this poem a measure of dignity ?

2. Where does Cleveland, on sound ground in dealing with the aspect of wealth, fail to carry conviction ?

3. Note Cleveland's lofty scorn of London. What reflection fills him with exulting triumph ? Is this characteristic of the North ?

### *The Great Fire*

1. The great clearness and force of this extract deserve notice, observe the effect of details. Yet they are mainly general; compare the particularized details in Pepys's account. (See *Pepys's Diary* )

2. There are, however, a few "particular" details here, what are they ?

3. "London was, but is no more." Pepys says it "made me weep to see it." Where is the more human touch ?

4. How does Evelyn's reference to his "little Zoar" strike you ?

### *A Fortnight of London Life*

This will repay close study, not only for its wealth of illustration of seventeenth-century life, but its revelation of the author's mind. The following hints may help :

1. Observe how many topics Pepys touches on, and make a list of some of them.

2. What points of interest emerge in the entries for Dec. 1st, 4th, 7th, 12th ?

3. What passages make it clear the Diary was not meant for publication ?

*An Author on Tour*

1. From these extracts select examples of Defoe's "unadorned directness."

2. What evidence is there that Defoe was essentially a practical man ?

3. Note the delightful unconscious humour of the reference to Lady Godiva.

4. There are pleasant little "asides." Trace them.

*At Holyhead*

With this petulant epigram the reader may compare Byron's lines on Malta.

*Sir Roger in the Abbey*

1. What features of this extract bear out Johnson's view that Addison was the supreme master of English style ?

2. Does the great charm lie in the writing or in the conception of the character of the old knight ?

3. Is either in harmony with the spirit of Addison's age ?

*The Man of Ross Oxford*

1. Note in these extracts the characteristic didactic note of the age.

2. Compare Goldsmith's simple and unaffected description of the village preacher.

3. The passage on Oxford reveals an unusual delight in rural scenery. Do you consider the passage on Oxford exhibits anything of a pose ?

*London Streets*

1. Note Gay's indignant verses on the prevalent ill-usage of horses, and the retribution that should

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follow. Compare W. H. Hudson's remarks on those who eat wheat-ears (*Nature in Downland*).

2. What other lines here are notable for their vigour? And what evidence of the lack of control of city life is afforded here?

### *Farewell to Bath*

Where is the charm of these verses? Read some of the author's letters, and trace the same features.

### *Leeds in 1757*

1. What elements contribute to the cheerful air of Dyer's verses? Would Swift have viewed the scene thus?

2. Dyer was not a great poet, but there are many happy touches here—e.g. the *ruddy* roofs, the *sleeky* kine. Collect others.

### *A Travelling Preacher*

1. Trace through these passages the qualities of vigour and action

2. What valuable sidelights on social history are given here?

3. Note the admirable power of the opening lines of the letter on Bristol jail.

### *Southampton*

1. What passages bear out Mr. Herbert Paul's remarks quoted in the headnote?

2. Can you recall a more beautiful account of a sunrise than the one quoted here? Compare *Lorna Doone*. (See *The Pleasant Land of England*.)

### *Newmarket and London*

1. What flashes of wit are visible in this extract?

2. Would Walpole's grievances against the country-

town have affected any one but a man of fashion ?  
Is not his professed dislike of society merely a pose ?

*Dr. Johnson and Town Life*

1. Compare Johnson's reasons for loving London with those of Walpole.
2. What illustrations of Johnson's caustic humour are given here ?
3. Why do you think Johnson felt that the tide of human happiness was at Charing Cross.

*Aldborough*

- 1 "Our idle tribe"—Compare William Morris, "the idle singer of an empty day." But did either really believe this ?
- 2 Crabbe's pride in his modest town is not marred by sneers at larger places. In what cases may the reverse be said ?
3. Certain phrases are very apt (*e.g.* squalid sea-dames). Collect other examples.

*An Outspoken Critic*

1. Why should Cobbett rage furiously at Cheltenham ? What particularly vigorous phrases stick in the reader's mind ?
- 2 Cobbett's nervous English frequently selects just the right word. Gather examples here (*e.g.* the *horrible splendour* of Sheffield)
3. Note how often he speaks of the *clean* and *neat* town. Romance had little part in his make-up. What other features in these extracts show it ?
4. Who leaves the most vivid picture of a place in the reader's mind—Defoe, Wesley, or Cobbett ?

*Wordsworth goes to Cambridge*

1. Show how a feature of this extract is the clearness with which long-past incidents are recalled. •

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2. The passage abounds in happy phrases : I was the Dreamer, they the Dream," etc. Gather examples. Note, too, the splendid picture of Newton

3. What rather unexpected self-revelation is here ?

4. This extract illustrates at once the feeling of recovered youth and the gravity of a riper experience. What passages reveal these aspects ?

### *A Fair City*

1. In dealing with the mediæval city Scott has been equalled only by Charles Reade. In *The Fair Maid of Perth* the reader will find a number of other aspects of the city set out with consummate skill, *e.g.* the conclave of citizens, street revels, the ordeal of battle, etc.

2. In the second passage, note how skilfully Simon Glover's state of mind is set out. What touches of humour are found even here.

### *At Lyme Regis*

1. What features of this extract exhibit Jane Austen's power ?

2. Which is the dominating element—the scene, or the people ?

### *In Praise of Chimney-Sweepers, etc.*

1. What passages in these extracts show Lamb's whimsical humour and kindly affection ?

2. Lamb's power of creating vivid impressions is well shown in the essay on Sweeps (*e.g.* the tale of the sweep stuck in the chimney). What other examples occur ?

3. What is the dominant feeling recalled by the passage on theatre-going ? Is it the half-painful recollection of past joys, or a strong conviction that simple pleasures are the best, or the inevitable regret for "the days that were" ?

4. What touches of true pathos are found here ?

*A Letter from Winchester*

Note the unexpected revelation of wit in Keats's letter. How does the letter harmonize with the poem?

*St. Edmundsbury*

1 Observe how the whole of this extract is a comment on Carlyle's phrase concerning the life of the past, that the astonishing circumstance is "that it is a *fact* and no dream."

2 How does he succeed in making the past live again?

3 Such a passage reveals his style at its best. Compare his own account of his style in *Sartor Resartus*. Is the latter quite correct?

4 This extract gives us Carlyle's conception of History. What is it?

*Mrs. Carlyle at Ramsgate*

1 Can the reader recall a more sprightly letter than this? In what ways does it reveal the writer? And what was obviously her nature?

2 Note the piling up of detail on detail, and of adjective on adjective.

*English Towns in the Seventeenth Century*

1 In all these passages, with one exception, there is little of Macaulay's most sonorous rolling prose. Which is the exception?

2 Note how he creates his impression by repeated details. Seek examples.

3 Also note the tendency to superlatives: "ale flowed in *oceans*," where one might expect "rivers"

4 Read closely to observe how his astonishing knowledge of minute details is revealed (*e.g.* in "Sheffield," and "Buxton")

5. Where else in Macaulay's works may we parallel the noble passage on St. Peter's Chapel?

*New London Bridge, etc.*

1. What qualities make such extracts pleasant to read ?

2. Compare the author's account of the Bristol Riots with Dickens's picture of the Gordon Riots (see *Barnaby Rudge*). Which is the more vivid ?

*Men and Cities*

1. The descriptive passage on Norwich should be read aloud. What turns of language and thought are characteristic of Borrow ?

2. Read again Macaulay's account of Norwich and note how it differs from that of Borrow.

3. Why did Borrow pass up Lombard Street without heeding it, and hang fascinated over London Bridge ?

4. Note the breathless sustained interest of the scene. Seek other examples.

5. Borrow had the rare art of making a thrilling narrative with but a slender material of incident. Select illustrations of this from these passages.

*Our Society*

1. Wherein lies the charm of *Cranford* ?

2. What arguments may be found for the view that *Cranford* was not really what Mrs. Gaskell's mind made it appear ?

3. Even so, would this be a thing to be disparaged ?

4. Note that there is nothing of the *place*; the *people* fill the picture. But does this imply that the place was a matter of indifference ?

*Beverley and Skipton*

1. Note how the narrative sweeps on like a torrent.

2. Why is it that the people in Froude's pages actually *live* ?



3. Collect examples of most telling phrases (*e.g.* "eyes staring, hair streaming").
4. Do you think it is a reproach to be termed a "romantic historian"?

*St. Ogg*

1. Show how this extract is sufficient to redeem the author from the charge of "heaviness".
2. Note how the legend is made to foreshadow the tragedy.
3. The writer gathers up the histories of past occupants to complete her picture of the houses. Does this aid in the reader's conception of the scene?
4. Select examples of her skilful use of adjectives.

*A City by Night, etc.*

1. The first extract is a great contrast to the others; note its deep solemnity and the profound philosophical speculations arising.
2. Compare it with Wordsworth's picture of London asleep (*On Westminster Bridge*).
3. How do *Tellson's Bank* and *Coketown* illustrate Dickens's power of piling detail on detail and investing all with the same characteristic?
4. Ruskin said that Dickens's view was always the correct one, sharply and grossly told. How does *Coketown* exemplify this?
5. *Shy Neighbourhoods* is one continuous delight. Notice the innumerable delightful touches. Read the whole essay in *The Uncommercial Traveller*.
6. What characteristically Dickensian features are seen in the extracts on Yarmouth and Gloucester?

*The Great Commoner. Steele and Addison*

1. Thackeray's knowledge of the eighteenth century was rivalled only by Macaulay's. What evidences of it are shown here?

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2. How is the writer's great power of portraiture shown in these extracts ?

### *"Bideford in Devon"*

1. Observe how these passages show Kingsley's gift for vigorous narrative.

2. In the pageant, is Kingsley right in mingling the cultured and the crude ?

3. How does he display the rough humour of the age, and the blending of all classes ?

### *Tewkesbury and Cheltenham*

1. What are the few vivid touches which unmistakably reveal Tewkesbury ?

2. Note how the author, in a few lines, reveals a character sharply. What instances occur here ?

### *An Election at Dewsbury*

What qualities make this "eminently readable" ?

### *Portsmouth Harbour*

1. Besant excelled in descriptions of city scenes. What illustrations may be found in this passage ?

2. He was no countryman. Note his inadequate description of the gorse here, and compare Goldsmith's "blossomed furze, *unprofitably* gay."

3. There is more than one delightful touch of humour which will repay search.

### *Stratford-upon-Avon*

1. Observe how well suited to the theme is the grave, tender beauty of these sonnets. Note also how the effect is constantly heightened by phrases such as "silent eventide."

2. With the first sonnet, compare Carlyle's view of the Hero as Poet.

3. Is the beautiful picture of the mother and child too fanciful for your taste?

*On London Stones*

This short poem breathes the spirit of the true city love—a realization of the *influence* of the place.

*Casterbridge*

1. Hardy is, perhaps unwillingly, one of our greatest masters of humour. Trace illustrations here

2. These passages illustrate also his skill in portraiture. Note examples.

3. Do all the various hindrances to traffic, etc., which he records appear out of harmony with the place, or irritating?

*The Merry Bells of Chester*

1. Does the metre help the effect of this poem? Notice the joyous lilt in places, and the heavy effect of "sole and slow."

2. Froude calls the music of church bells a peculiar survival of a vanished age. Is this adequate?

*Sunny Brighton*

1. Are not the features of Brighton which charmed Jefferies those which would appeal to a nature-lover? Would the genuine city-lover notice these?

2. "I am a great believer in light." You will find this expanded at length in the writer's *The Story of My Heart*

3. Note the "colour" in the closing section. Jefferies loved colour. Seek other illustrations of this in his book *The Open Air*.

*Chester Cathedral    The Lost Child*

1. How do these letters reveal the whimsical humour and kindly heart of Stevenson?

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2 "A latent faculty for setting children's hearts at rest" How do Stevenson's writing and life bear out this statement?

### *A Cinque Port*

1 How does the author seek to convey the completeness of the change?

2 What phrases display the poet's nice choice of words?

### *Taunton Town*

1 How does the beauty of the rural scene at once harmonize with and afford a contrast to the scene that followed?

2 Note how the author succeeds in picturing the stirring life of a seventeenth-century town

3 The same vigorous direct style is maintained throughout. Read from later chapters the account of Sedgemoor and the Assize-Court

### *The Birmingham Ballads*

1. The joyous swing of these poems is noteworthy. With the first, compare De Quincey's account "Going Down with Victory." The ballad quoted here is nearer the spirit of the day.

2 Why do you think it is that comparatively few poets have recalled stirring scenes in their own town?

### *Bradford*

1. How has the writer here caught the "romance of a great trade"? Compare Dyer, *Leeds in 1757*

2. How is the past linked to the present?

3 Why does the author delight in names unknown to any but a local person? Seek the same tendency in other modern poets.

*The Streets*

1. The picture of childhood here is bleak. Is not the spirit of the city one which only an adult can feel and appreciate?

2. Note the beautiful touch in the last stanza, where the child catches sight of the star. There are other vivid impressions recorded here, which should be sought out.

*Herschel Conducts*

1. In this powerful poem, note the alternate appeal of music and of science, and the calm dignity of "I have chosen."

2. The figures pass before him as in a vision. Recall Wordsworth's line, "I was the Dreamer, they the Dream." Observe how the pettiness of his surroundings leads him into infinite questionings and speculations.

3. Through all runs the spirit of the creator, the leader, the soul hungering for knowledge. Collect illustrations of this.

*Liverpool Docks*

1. How many features of the docks are mentioned here? Yet there is nothing in the nature of a catalogue. How is it avoided?

2. The docks are personified to the writer. Gather illustrations of this, and then note how this extends even to articles of commerce.

3. Is not the idea of ruthless efficiency almost terrifying?—the endless moaning sound, the torment of labour. Compare the gentle spirit of St. Ogg.

*Afterglow. London Pool*

1. How do these poems, so diverse in metre, reveal the same longing desire?

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2. Compare Masfield, "I must go down to the sea again," and Kipling, "*L'Envoi*."

3. Compare the joyous *London Pool* with Scott's *Liverpool*.

### *In Lady Street*

1. Can you recall a more effective contrast than is afforded in this most powerful poem?

2. Observe the vigour of phrase (e.g. in the description of the grey man). Seek other examples.

3. How does the author succeed in bringing colour into the picture?

4. Is it correct after all to say that the grey man has not bent life to his will?

THE END

















